

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES JANUARY 17, 1996

PRESENT:

Mayor Walter Fitzgerald
Councillor Bill Dooks
Councillor Gordon Snow
Councillor David Hendsbee
Councillor Ron Cooper
Councillor Harry McInroy
Councillor Jack Greenough
Councillor Condo Sarto
Councillor Clint Schofield
Councillor John Cunningham
Councillor Jerry Blumenthal
Councillor Graham L. Downey
Councillor Larry Uteck
Councillor Howard Epstein
Councillor Russell Walker
Councillor Bill Stone
Councillor Ron Hanson
Councillor Steve Adams
Councillor Barry Barnet
Councillor Bob Harvey
Councillor Peter Kelly
Councillor Reg Rankin
Councillor Jack Mitchell

REGRETS:

Councillor Bruce Hetherington
(For Health Reasons)

ALSO PRESENT:

K. R. Meech, Chief Administrative Officer
George McLellan, Commissioner
of Regional Operations
Wayne Anstey, Solicitor
Sandra Shute, Recording Secretary

The meeting, which had been convened for the purposes of receiving an overview of the MIRROR Group proposal, was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

His Worship Mayor Fitzgerald advised that he had been contacted by several members of the public who had expressed an interest in making presentations on this matter. He suggested (**and it was so agreed**) that a special meeting of Committee of the Whole be scheduled to receive those presentations.

Mr. George McLellan, Commissioner of Regional Operations, began the proceedings by suggesting that the MIRROR Group be given an opportunity to present their proposal and then to respond to questions.

The following individuals were introduced: Mr. David Nantes, Project Manager for the MIRROR Group; Mr. Hugh Smith, Chairman and Vice-President of Municipal Enterprises; Mr. Kurt Jacobs, CEO of the MIRROR Group and Vice-President of BFI (Atlantic Canada); Mr. Steven Foster, MIRROR Group; Mr. Bob Shaw, Shaw Group; Mr. David Pace, Evergreen; Mr. Hector Jacques, Jacques Whitford; Messrs. Jerry Isenor and Stuart Hattie (Porter Dillon); Mr. Grant Morash, Deloitte and Touche; and Messrs. Frank Ross and Michael Healy from Fraser Brace, Construction Managers.

Using a map for illustration purposes, Mr. Nantes advised that a Residuals Disposal Facility and a Front-End Processing facility are being proposed for the same site. Another component, that being the source separator of organics, is intended to be the subject of a separate tender call with others (not the MIRROR Group) being given the opportunity to decide where that operation will be located. Mr. Nantes went on to indicate that an interchange is proposed for construction approximately 3 km. from the Bayers Lake Industrial Park, its primary purpose being to provide alternate access to the Lakeside/Timberlea area. It was emphasized, however, that the location of the facility is slightly in excess of 3 km. from residential development. In terms of vehicles bringing materials to the site, it is anticipated that there would be 10-12 arrivals per hour operating on a 12-hour day.

Mr. Nantes pointed out that there would appear to be some confusion in the minds of the public regarding access from the Goodwood area along Highway 333. He emphasized that there would be no traffic at any time (either during the construction period or during the life of the facility itself) accessing the site via Highway 333. The single point of access is intended to be Highway 103.

Mr. Kurt Jacobs began his presentation by suggesting that one of the most complex issues facing municipal governments today was the disposal of waste, a situation which is exacerbated by the fact that few people wish to have a "dump" in their neighborhood. Mr. Jacobs went on to point out that, because of the

controversy which normally surrounds the waste disposal issue, it is rare that any new landfills are created; rather, a decision is usually made simply to expand existing sites.

Because the Sackville Landfill site is scheduled to close in 1996, however, the Community Stakeholders Committee (CSC) was established for the purposes of identifying a location for a replacement facility. Members very quickly reached the conclusion that no community would willingly accept a waste disposal operation similar to that which had existed in Sackville. They therefore developed a strategy which would see everyone in the metropolitan community taking responsibility for waste and furthermore ensuring that offensive and/or hazardous materials were not disposed in the host community.

Mr. Jacobs went on to point out that one of the primary components of the CSC strategy was an education and communication program designed to assist residents in making the lifestyle changes necessary to achieve the waste management/reduction objectives. The strategy also emphasizes "leadership by example," recommending that the municipality implementing the strategy would also commit to taking proactive stances on stewardship, source separation, and waste reduction.

Mr. Jacobs made reference to a number of initiatives now underway including the Province's disposal bag project (proposed for implementation by April 1, 1996), and the popularity of back-yard composters as a tool to reducing the amount of waste delivered to the waste management facility. Mention was also made of the household hazardous waste facility which will open on the site of the existing recycling operation in the Bayers Lake Business Park early this Spring. Mr. Jacobs pointed out that these projects and others are essential for the siting process to ensure that the waste materials destined for the facility are kept to a minimum and also that the more problematic elements are kept away from the Residuals Disposal site. In this context, he noted that the CSC view the Residuals Disposal Facility as the final step in the waste resource management process -- only inert, stabilized material would be directed to this site.

Mr. Jacobs advised that, once the four municipalities had agreed in principle to the CSC Strategy, a Call for Proposals with regard to the implementation process had been issued to the private sector. The proposal put forward by the MIRROR Group had eventually been chosen but as involvement up to this point in time had been primarily from the County of Halifax, it was felt that Regional Council should be given the opportunity of commenting. In this context, Mr. Jacobs acknowledged that some Councillors had expressed concern regarding the cost of the plan and the anticipated diversion levels while others felt certain of the terms in the Master Agreement were not sufficiently detailed.

On the matter of cost, Mr. Jacobs pointed out that the CSC Strategy contains significantly higher goals than the current system which sees only 10 percent of waste materials being diverted. The CSC Strategy, in comparison, anticipates a diversion level of 56 percent in its first year of operation, providing that **all** components of the Strategy are implemented. Mr. Jacobs suggested that if Council wished to reduce costs, it could do so by changing certain directives of the Strategy; e.g., abandoning the diversion component, allowing additional materials to be directed to the landfill site, or both. In this context, he indicated that the question is not one of whether the proposed facilities will be capable of handling such high levels of diverted materials, but rather the willingness exhibited by the community at large to effect the necessary lifestyle changes.

Commenting on concerns raised pertaining to "monopolies," Mr. Jacobs observed that the Call for Proposals, the Memorandum of Understanding, and the Master Agreement all clearly state that a monopoly on the provision of waste management services would be prohibited. Consequently, it is proposed that the MIRROR Group would own one facility and operate three, with the remaining components being owned by a private sector group other than MIRROR.

In this same context, Mr. Jacobs pointed out that the Master Agreement clearly states that the municipality is responsible for both establishing tipping fees as well as for controlling access to all waste management facilities. He acknowledged that concerns have been raised that, because of his personal association with BFI, the MIRROR proposal is an attempt to destroy competition in the waste management industry. Mr. Jacobs firmly rejected that allegation, noting that there are currently over 30 waste management companies well established in the Metro Halifax community.

In conclusion, Mr. Jacobs made reference to the options now remaining. He noted that, because the Province has rejected the concept of incineration, Council is left with the option of either accepting the CSC strategy or of beginning the search process all over again.

Mr. Steven Foster began his presentation by emphasizing that the success of the proposed waste management strategy depends on the successful implementation of a number of its components. One of those components is the residential recycling effort or "blue bag" program which is currently responsible for diverting approximately 5 percent of the community's waste materials. It is suggested that through intensive public education efforts, the establishment of a household hazardous waste facility, and a continuing focus on composting, diversion percentages can be considerably increased.

Reference was made to the Front End Processing facility with Mr. Foster pointing out that an operation such as this is necessary as it is acknowledged that not everyone will participate in the waste management program. He stated that the

facility is intended to play a key role in keeping organic materials, hazardous waste and banned products from the landfill, and added that workers will actually be opening bags and sorting their contents. Again, only stabilized or inert materials will be earmarked for the landfill.

Mr. Foster went on to refer to commercial operations such as restaurants, noting that the use of private composting facilities would be promoted as a method of controlling waste from these operations. He added that various methods of implementing a commercial collection program are also being looked at, and noted that the potential exists for very high recoveries because the materials in question will not be contaminated with organics.

It was emphasized that the necessity for a Front End Processing Facility is dependent on the degree of community involvement in the waste recycling/reduction program. Mr. Foster suggested that if, for instance, the Municipality wished to invest heavily in public education programs and/or in user fees, it was reasonable to expect that at some point in the future the need for a sorting plant would cease.

In closing, Mr. Foster made reference to the draft Provincial Solid Waste Management Strategy which, among other things, proposes a deposit system for beverage containers (similar to that now being implemented in New Brunswick) as well as a Resource Recovery Fund designed to market recoverable materials. It was acknowledged that, at this point in time, the impact of the Provincial proposal on the objectives of the CSC Strategy cannot be definitively measured. However, Mr. Foster suggested that since the Province will be targeting cans, glass and plastic bottles, it is possible that the current recycling program could decrease in volume by approximately 20-30 percent owing to diversion.

Mr. Grant Morash of Deloitte and Touche provided a cost comparison of the current system and that proposed by the CSC Strategy. He pointed out, however, that the process was akin, in some respects, to comparing "apples and oranges" because the current approach to waste management is based on the operation of a landfill site while the new strategy focuses on the recycling effort. The following points were made:

- administrative costs of the two systems are estimated to be very similar while the handling of household hazardous waste is expected to be slightly more expensive under the proposed strategy
- a major difference will be in the cost of providing education and communication programs required to ensure that residents become familiar with the new system

- waste transfer and transport is included in the new system under the Front End Processing facility costs and are not therefore directly comparable
- the Materials Recovery Facility gives a higher value to recyclables under the new system
- the cost of the present Residual Disposal Facility is higher than in the proposed system because it includes the amortized costs of extending the cell life of the Sackville landfill as well as an amount representing one-third of the costs to Sackville residents for the extension of the landfill site (under the new system it is proposed that debt charges would be distributed among the various cost components)
- the Front End Processing Facility as well as site acquisition and development costs represent new components of the waste management strategy for which there are no cost comparisons under the existing system

With reference to the RDF closure and post-closure, Mr. Morash noted that under the new system these costs must be factored in and, if possible, amortized over a period of 10 years.

Mr. Hugh Smith, Vice President of Municipal Enterprises and Chairman of the MIRROR Group, outlined the concerns pertaining to the waste management proposal which have been expressed to him over the last several weeks, and noted that these concerns can largely be categorized under the headings of cost, redundancy, the need for further expert opinion, contract difficulties, and delay.

On the matter of "cost," Mr. Smith advised that there are three elements which must be taken into consideration, those being capital, non-fixed capital and operating costs. He went on to point out that under the proposal, capital costs are separated out with an agreed-upon return; after 20 years the capital items are owned by the Municipality. Non-fixed capital items and operating costs will be annual budget items with the MIRROR Group being required to prepare an annual budget proposal for Council's approval. Under the agreement, MIRROR would be responsible for any cost over-runs; however, if there are savings, it is proposed that they be shared. It is further proposed that there will be an annual incentive for MIRROR to operate at the lower-than-budgeted cost with the previous year's budget serving as the benchmark for the next.

Referring to the question of "redundancy," Mr. Smith referred to the Front End Processing Facility, emphasizing that it had been planned with the possibility of

future diversion rates in mind. He added that while changes in the system are inevitable, the impact on the facility would be in terms of the nature of the waste delivered to it and the number of shifts, not in the physical size of the operation itself.

Mr. Smith made reference to the requests for another expert opinion, calling it a case of "an expert to check the experts." In this context, he referred to the Morrison Knudsen report and emphasized that the conclusions reached in that report represented three months of review and analysis which, in the end, had found the MIRROR proposal to be a fair and reasonable one.

With specific reference to the proposed contract, Mr. Smith pointed to the areas in which the MIRROR Group is prepared to assume full responsibility, and emphasized that the agreement includes a seven day Termination Clause to be used by the municipality if at any time a decision is made not to proceed.

Mr. Smith concluded his remarks by alluding to the suggestion that Moncton, New Brunswick could be used as a temporary disposal site. He emphasized that, in his opinion, this would not be an appropriate solution to the problem, given that that city uses a wet landfill process. In this context, Mr. Smith made reference to the money and the jobs that would be lost if the decision were made to use the Moncton site to resolve metro's waste problems for the next two to three years. He emphasized that the Master Agreement has been designed to provide maximum flexibility as the waste management process continues to develop. He added that the detailed agreements will take several months to prepare and will be brought back to Council for review and approval before any decisions are made. On a final note, Mr. Smith made reference to the delays already encountered in the attempt to resolve the community's waste problems, and urged that the Master Agreement be approved as quickly as possible as the first step in providing one of the most advanced and secure waste management systems in North America.

Responding to a question from Councillor Kelly, Mr. David Mann stated that the technology to be used by the MIRROR Group was not in itself particularly unique. He emphasized, however, that what **was** unique about MIRROR's proposal was that the technology would be packaged to provide a complete system from the first day of operation. He went on to note that shares in this technological process have been proposed as a 50-50 partnership between MIRROR and the municipal council.

Councillor Kelly indicated that, in his opinion, the Master Agreement should contain a clause stipulating that local taxpayers will share in any profits obtained from marketing the system.

A discussion ensued as to whether Council was being asked to consider at this evening's meeting only the proposed Master Agreement or the strategy itself.

Concurring with comments put forward by Councillor Rankin, Mayor Fitzgerald indicated that the purpose of tonight's meeting was to obtain information on the proposed contract as well as on the implementation plan. A further meeting would then be scheduled at which time comments from the public would be sought. Following that, a third meeting would be held at which time Regional Council would be asked to bring forward a recommendation to be forwarded to County Council.

Councillor Rankin made reference to the site approval which is required from the Department of Environment and asked for an update on this matter.

Mr. Nantes responded that a working committee (consisting of representatives from the Department and from MIRROR) has met on a weekly basis with the design team, particularly on the matter of the Residuals Disposal Facility. He went on to point out that because of the close working relationship that has been established between the Province and the MIRROR Group, he did not anticipate that the MIRROR proposal would experience any difficulties in meeting Departmental standards.

Responding to a further question from Councillor Rankin, Mr. Nantes indicated that the interchange had not been factored into the cost of the implementation plan because at the present time an exact location had not been identified. He acknowledged, however, that construction of the interchange was likely to cost in the area of \$3.5 million and would have to be added to the equation.

Councillor Rankin noted that there did not appear to be provision in the Agreement for transfers and asked whether that implied that there would be no transfer stations.

Mr. Nantes responded that the establishment of transfer stations depended on Council's approach to collection contracts. He noted, however, that because the Front End Processing facility would act as a transfer point, there was some provision for the transfer of costs associated with that operation.

Councillor Rankin referred to variable costs and expressed concern that, in the first year's budget, these costs had not been itemized. In this same context, he asked for information as to whether labour costs represented the main component of these variables, pointing out that labour, oil and various other operating costs are not factors in establishing the CPI.

Mr. Nantes advised that only the first year's budget had been reviewed by Morrison Knudsen. Budgets for subsequent years would be based on the results of the first year of operation and would be a matter fully open for review by staff and Council. He went on to make reference to Councillor Rankin's concern regarding the ownership of the Front End Processing facility, noting that MIRROR had undertaken to assume 100 percent ownership since this component represents the one with the

greatest degree of risk. Mr. Nantes emphasized, however, that the question of ownership was a flexible one and certainly open to negotiation, should Council deem it appropriate.

Councillor Hendsbee asked for clarification as to the Termination Clause, specifically as to whether, if this clause were exercised, the private sector would have to be compensated for the Front End Processing facility and whether that facility would then become the property of the municipality.

Mr. Mann responded by describing a hypothetical situation in which the facility had been in operation for three to four years but was not deemed to be performing up to expected standards. Under those circumstances, the MIRROR Group would be requested to make the necessary adjustments or to find an outside party to do the repairs. Mr. Mann pointed out that there were a number of options that could come into play in this type of scenario and that all of them should be included in the contract for the protection of both parties. He emphasized, however, that there was no intention of forcing the municipality to pay for a facility that did not work.

Responding to a question from Councillor Blumenthal, Mr. Jacobs noted that Council has the option of deciding to join with the Resource Recovery Fund and allow them to market the community's recyclables.

Councillor Cooper made reference to the \$1 million proposed for public education and asked for clarification as to how the success of this public education program would be monitored.

Mr. Nantes emphasized that the success of the proposed waste management strategy depends to a very large degree on reeducating the public (i.e., both the public and private sectors) in terms of their approach to waste disposal. He made reference to the fact that at the present time the diversion rate stands at approximately 10 percent with MIRROR hoping to increase that to approximately 56 percent in its first year of operation. He therefore suggested that comparison on an ongoing basis of diversion rates, coupled with a monitoring of public comment and response, should provide a clear indication as to the effectiveness of the monies set aside for public education. Mr. Nantes added that the annual amounts set aside for this aspect of the waste management process would be decided by mutual agreement between the public and private partners.

Councillor Cooper indicated that, in his opinion, benchmarks should be established to provide for more effective monitoring of the process.

With reference to a question from Mayor Fitzgerald, Mr. Nantes indicated that the public education program was intended to be a negotiated part of the contract, subject to an annual review.

Responding to a question from Councillor Schofield, Mr. Nantes indicated that it was entirely possible (given an early start date) that the interchange would be in place by January 1, 1997. He went on to point out that, from MIRROR's perspective, it was essential that the interchange be constructed as quickly as possible so as to provide access during the construction phase to both the Front End Processing facility and to the landfill site. Mr. Nantes also noted that the Department of Transportation had been very clear in terms of what would be permitted for this interchange, and that these instructions had been conveyed to the committee established to work with the Province on its design.

In answer to a further question from Councillor Schofield, Mr. Nantes indicated that, according to the Province, there had been no immediate plans for an interchange at this location and therefore they did not believe that cost-sharing with the municipality was warranted. Mr. Nantes pointed out, however, that the interchange built as part of the Region's waste management strategy was also going to prove of tremendous benefit to the residents of Lakeside/Timberlea. He therefore suggested that the question of cost-sharing was something that Regional Council might wish to pursue with the Province.

With reference to a question from Mayor Fitzgerald, Mr. Nantes advised that the estimated cost of the interchange was \$3.5 million, not including the cost of access roads.

Responding to a question from Councillor Uteck, Mr. Nantes indicated that the composting materials separated at the Front End Processing facility are considered to be in addition to those factored in as part of the 56% diversion rate. He went on to advise that these materials could be used as landfill cover or for beautification programs for municipal parks, depending on the arrangements made with the private sector.

Councillor Mitchell asked for clarification as to the proposed impact of the landfill site on Highway 103.

Mr. Nantes replied that the number of trucks would total approximately 125, based on a 12-hour day and a five-day week. He added that this was a comparatively small number, given the average traffic counts on this highway at the present time.

Councillor Hendsbee made reference to a land claim which, he suggested, would have to be settled before the interchange could proceed. In his remarks, the Councillor noted that there is a 167 acre parcel of land for which the Halifax Water Commission claims ownership but which was originally granted to the Coloured People of Beech Hill. Councillor Hendsbee went on to note that research conducted by Mr. Wade White, a local resident, appears to indicate that the Water Commission has never paid for its expropriation of the land in 1960. He emphasized

that efforts must be made to ensure that the commitments made to the original families of Beech Hill are satisfied and that the situation is brought to resolution.

Responding to a question from Councillor Greenough, Mr. Nantes clarified that, once the Master Agreement has been signed, it is MIRROR's intention to begin work on the interchange immediately. He went on to point out that this particular project constitutes a major undertaking, accounting for some 400 construction jobs in 1996 if the interchange is to be completed during the current calendar year. He went on to advise that the Provincial Department of Transportation (including representatives of its Traffic and Safety Divisions) have been working with MIRROR over the last several months in an effort to facilitate and expedite the approval process in terms of siting.

Councillor Adams expressed concern regarding the impact of the proposed waste management strategy on the independent haulers and asked for clarification as to how Council can ensure that monopolies on the trucking of waste materials are avoided.

Mr. Nantes responded that these concerns had been conveyed to him very early on in the process, and that the Negotiating Team had identified them in the drafting of the proposed contract. He went on to point out that at the present time there is one collector in the City of Halifax and approximately 15 in the County. When those contracts expire, it will be Council's responsibility to decide whether to maintain existing routes or to consolidate them into one large one. If the decision is made to maintain the small collector routes, it is unlikely that a large trucking company would be interested in pursuing the contract.

Responding to a further question from Councillor Adams, Mr. Jacobs indicated that because the location of the Front End Processing facility has only recently been decided, no real analysis has been done as to whether a transfer facility will be required on the Dartmouth side of the Harbor. He went on to suggest that the addition of such a facility would be a matter for Council to decide.

In reference to a question from Councillor Kelly on the matter of source separated composting, Mr. Nantes indicated that the concept was to go out to the private sector and ask for site proposals. He added that this site could be located in close proximity to the other waste facilities, but emphasized that this was a decision that would be left up to Council to make. It was noted that roughly 13-14 companies have already responded to an advertisement inserted by the County of Halifax shortly before Christmas.

Councillor Sarto made reference to the fact that both the Memorandum of Understanding and the Master Agreement call for contract reviews in five-year

increments. The Councillor asked for clarification as to the factors intended to form the basis of these periodic reviews.

Mr. Mann emphasized that the proposal put forward by the MIRROR Group and contained in the Master Agreement is very much performance oriented. If during any of the periodic reviews, it is determined that the process is not achieving expected performance levels and/or budgets are not being met, it would be Council's responsibility to reassess the situation and make the necessary adjustments.

Responding to a further question from Councillor Sarto, Mr. Smith responded that, in order for the municipality to meet its commitments with respect to the Sackville Landfill, MIRROR would have to be on site by April 1996.

Councillor Sarto made reference to the fact that the County of Halifax had heavily subsidized the purchase of composting bins. He noted, however, that because many people find the cost of "blue bags" exorbitant, they are reluctant to participate in the recycling program. To that end, the Councillor asked if consideration had been given (as part of the proposed public education program) to subsidizing the provision of blue bags to local residents.

Mr. Smith concurred with Councillor Sarto's comments, noting that these same concerns had been raised with the various Focus Groups. He indicated, however, that the details of the collection program have not yet been finalized and that while subsidization of the blue bags may be considered, an alternative may be to provide residents with a more permanent type of blue container.

Responding to comments made by Mr. Jacobs regarding the effectiveness of "user-pay" as part of the waste management process, Mayor Fitzgerald asked for advice from Mr. Meech as to how the implementation of "user pay" would impact on tax revenues. Mr. Meech advised that calculations in this regard had been undertaken by the County in the past, and that he would endeavor to make these figures available to members of Council.

Councillor Hendsbee made reference to the submissions received from staff of the Cities of Dartmouth and of Halifax, both of which recommend that outside experts be asked to comment on the proposed partnership. Noting staff's reservations in this regard, the Councillor asked for comment from Mr. Meech.

Mr. Meech began his remarks by emphasizing his own long-standing involvement in this issue and pointed out that, owing to the knowledge he had acquired through this involvement, he personally did not see the need for additional expert advice. He acknowledged, however, that if that advice were necessary in order to raise the comfort level so that the contract could be signed, he had no problem in seeking it.

Mr. Meech went on to point out that, in his view, one of the major stumbling blocks was the fact that staff have had limited experience in dealing with private/public partnerships. Consequently, they look for the kind of benchmarks or guarantees that are normally present in the more traditional type of agreements and express concern when those benchmarks cannot be found. Mr. Meech emphasized that, in his view, between the Master Agreement and the other agreements still to be negotiated, he personally had no doubt that all those concerns would be resolved.

Referring to the matter of marketing waste materials, Mayor Fitzgerald made reference to the Government's 50/50 program and strongly recommended that a representative of the MIRROR Group meet with the Board responsible for overseeing that program. Mr. Mann replied that he would undertake to do so as quickly as possible.

Councillor Walker indicated that he had considerable reservations with regard to the impact on existing traffic volumes of the proposed haulage requirements, and stated that, in his view, the routes that these haulers would take should be specified in the Master Agreement.

Councillor Epstein made reference to the individual components of the proposed private/public partnership, and emphasized that it would appear that any or all of those components could be undertaken by the municipality. He therefore asked for an explanation from the MIRROR Group as to why the concept of such a partnership is being promoted.

Mr. Smith responded that, as a starting point, the question of a private/public partnership depends on whether one believes that a municipal government is capable of efficiently operating a system as complex as a comprehensive waste management strategy. He went on to refer to the Region's experience with the Metropolitan Authority and indicated that one of the most significant advantages of a private/public partnership is the guarantee of fiscal responsibility and performance.

In the ensuing discussion, Mr. Meech suggested that the question of why this type of partnership is being pursued should more appropriately be addressed to the County of Halifax who had made the initial decision in this regard. While acknowledging that he shared Councillor Epstein's concerns with regard to certain of the assertions made in the Provincial paper on this subject, he did feel that a certain level of expertise was required in order to fully implement the waste management strategy. Mr. Meech pointed out that there were two options in terms of acquiring that expertise: hiring outside individuals as staff members, or seeking that expertise in the private sector. In addition, information is available which appears to indicate that the private sector has been more successful in operating these kinds of systems. Having taken all these points into consideration, it had been the County's decision to opt for a private/public partnership.

Councillor Cooper pointed out that the partnership concept had been endorsed by the community during the consultation process and was now the major premise of the Community Stakeholders Committee proposal.

Concurring with Councillor Cooper's remarks, Councillor Harvey expressed concern that some of the comments made during this evening's meeting seemed to indicate that Council should start to reevaluate the issue "from square one." He pointed out that the public is urging that a decision be made and, on that basis, encouraged his colleagues to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

Mayor Fitzgerald expressed his appreciation to the MIRROR Group for their participation in tonight's meeting, and asked that Mr. Meech find an appropriate date for the receipt of public comments as quickly as possible.

There being no further business to be discussed, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:15 p.m.

MAYOR WALTER FITZGERALD
CHAIRMAN

SUBMITTED BY:
LARRY CORRIGAN
INTERIM MUNICIPAL CLERK