

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
October 7, 1996

PRESENT: Mayor Walter Fitzgerald
Deputy Mayor Jack Greenough
Councillors Gordon R. Snow
David Hendsbee
Ron Cooper
Condo Sarto
Clint Schofield
John Cunningham
Jerry Blumenthal
Graham L. Downey
Larry Uteck
Russell Walker
Bill Stone
Ron Hanson
Robert Harvey
Reg Rankin
Jack Mitchell

ABSENT: Councillors Bill Dooks
Harry McInroy
Bruce Hetherington
Howard Epstein
Stephen Adams
Barry Barnet
Peter Kelly

STAFF MEMBERS: Mr. Ken Meech, Chief Administrative Officer
Barry Allen, Acting Municipal Solicitor
Ms. Jane Nauss, Assistant Municipal Clerk

Mayor Fitzgerald called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** - SEPTEMBER 17, 1996

MOVED by Councillors Blumenthal and Harvey to approve the minutes of September 17, 1996. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

2. **BUSINESS PARKS OFFICE - MR. TOM RATH**

Mr. Tom Rath introduced a member of his staff, Ms. Gina Mackey and through the use of overheads, provided the following information:

Parks owned and managed by HRM
Parks owned and managed by the Province
Overview of Business/Industrial Parks
Business Parks Office Mandate
Business Parks Office Performance Measures
1996/97 Approved Operating Budget
Sales and Leasing Activity
Overview of Projects.

Mayor Fitzgerald invited Council to make enquiries of Mr. Rath.

Councillor Stone enquired if two staff members were sufficient to deal with eight parks. He suggested that perhaps additional staff would be required to market the sale of land in these parks.

Councillor Schofield suggested the Region did not have sufficient available land. In response, Mr. Rath advised there was sufficient time for staff to respond to all land requests.

In response to an enquiry from Mayor Fitzgerald, Mr. Rath advised that in the 1970's and 80's, national companies were the chief employers, however, retail activity has increased over the years.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Cunningham, Mr. Rath advised the economy was turning around for the better.

In response to another enquiry from Councillor Cunningham, Mr. Rath advised that land prices are based on a market value basis.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Sarto as to how the Region fares in terms of

economic growth and employment, in comparison to the City of Moncton, Mr. Rath stated the Region has realized far more success than Moncton, even though land prices here are more expensive.

In response to another enquiry from Councillor Sarto, Mr. Rath advised that the Greater Halifax Partnership was located in the same area which made it easier for both the Business Parks and the Partnership to share information.

Deputy Mayor Greenough enquired if a printout of the active negotiations and those inactive, could be provided to Council.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Stone, Mr. Rath advised that for the past six months, the department has been in a responsive mode as it was busy establishing a new entity. Staff were now ready to go into an aggressive marketing mode. Mr. Rath also advised that within the next few months, an increase in staff may be required. As this is a demand driven activity, staff must be able to respond to enquiries immediately.

In response to a further enquiry from Councillor Stone on Ragged Lake, Mr. Rath stated there are three plans for the area, however, all are contrary to each other. The latest plan calls for a mixed type of development. This would have to be reviewed further, however.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Hendsbee if infrastructure for a transportation link with the #107 Highway was anticipated, Mr. Rath advised he would strongly encourage this, however, as to where the funding would be derived, this was another matter.

In response to another enquiry from Councillor Hendsbee if it is anticipated the Province will assign their parks to the Region, Mr. Rath felt there is a lot to be gained in this arrangement and that this would require further study.

Councillor Rankin advised he would like to see a portfolio as to what Halifax Regional Municipality owns as of this date.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Snow if any discussions have taken place on the zoning of AeroTech Park, Mr. Rath advised there is too narrow a market for the aerotech business. Accordingly, the zoning needs to permit for a wider range of activities.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Mitchell, Mr. Rath stated that staff have experienced some leasing success with Hubbards Square.

In response to another enquiry from Councillor Mitchell if the Business Parks works with the RDA, Mr. Rath advised in the affirmative.

Mayor Fitzgerald thanked Mr. Rath and his staff for the presentation.

Council took a two minute recess.

3. **PRESENTATION - MS. SONJA WOOD - ROLL FOR UNITY**

Following the break, Mayor Fitzgerald introduced Ms. Sonja Wood who was touring the Province in support of Phoenix House and Adsum House and the flood victims in Quebec. Ms. Wood expressed her appreciation to Council in inviting her to this Council Meeting. Her tour of the Province was known as a "Roll for Unity" in an attempt to creating unity in Canada. Eleven years ago, Ms. Wood walked around the Province to raise funds for Ethiopia. Following a car accident and now confined to a wheelchair, Ms. Wood advised she is proud of what she has achieved this time, although she has been a bit disappointed with the media coverage and subsequent fund raising attempts. On her run for Ethiopia, she raised \$11,000, however, to date, for her 1996 tour, she has raised \$2,100.

Ms. Wood, in her efforts to get her message to Quebec, enquired if the Mayor could correspond to the Premier of Quebec to let him know of her work. Further, she sent her regrets to the family on the passing away of Mr. Robert Bourassa in Quebec.

Mayor Fitzgerald thanked Ms. Wood for taking the time to make this presentation to Council and called her efforts to date remarkable. Further, he advised he would do what he could to assist her.

Councillor Hendsbee advised he had distributed information to the Assistant Municipal Clerk for distribution to Council. Further, he encouraged local service groups to assist Ms. Wood.

4. **HALIFAX REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (RDA) - MR. GREG BROWN**

Mr. Greg Brown introduced members of his staff to Council.

Mr. Brown distributed copies of the Annual Report and through the use of overheads, reviewed the following:

First Quarter Highlights
Second Quarter Highlights
Local Development Association Representation

Council representatives on the Board
Members at Large & Observers
RDA Staff
Action Plan - Progress Report
Action Plan Components
Enterprise Development
Client Services
Tourism, Recreation and Conservation
Natural Resources Development
Human Resources Development
Local Development Associations
Western Halifax Development Association
Sackville - Central Development Association
Cole Harbour Eastern Passage Development Association
Eastern Regional Development Association
Other Projects and Other Activities
Pending Issues & Initiatives.

Mayor Fitzgerald thanked Mr. Brown for his presentation and enquired if Council had any questions.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Blumenthal if the RDA worked closely with the Director of Tourism, Mr. Brown responded in the affirmative although their primary role is to work with entrepreneurs.

In response to another enquiry from Councillor Blumenthal, Mr. Brown advised out of a budget of \$475,000, salaries accounted for \$250,000.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Hendsbee, Mr. Brown advised the Department is focussed on getting membership groups up and working and commencing work on new plans.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Walker, Mr. Brown stated he would like to see the RDA working for the entire Region, however, at the moment, the Agency cannot take on further work.

In response to an enquiry from Deputy Mayor Greenough, Mr. Brown advised that the Agency's relationship with the Partnership is a complimentary affiliation. With economic development including a broad spectrum of activities, the Agency will focus its efforts to those of a local nature.

In response to a further enquiry from the Deputy Mayor on the role the Agency plays in

the creation of employment, Mr. Brown advised that their role is premise on the initiative and investment of entrepreneurs.

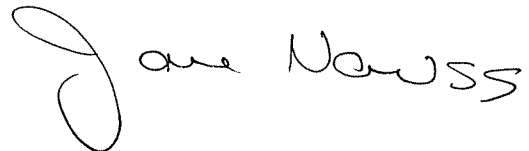
In response to an enquiry from Councillor Sarto as to how close the gypsum plants are to being operational, Mr. Brown advised within 12 - 18 months.

In response to another enquiry from Councillor Sarto, Mr. Brown advised the Agency is attempting to create statistics for various organizations relating to employment and this will be carried out in stages as it is extremely difficult to track.

Councillor Rankin expressed concern with lack of co-ordination and integration with the Partnership, the RDA and Business Parks.

Mayor Fitzgerald thanked Mr. Brown for his presentation.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Greenough and Councillor Rankin to adjourn the meeting at 5:15 p.m. to go In Camera. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.



Jane Nauss
Assistant Municipal Clerk