



**HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES
January 13, 2016**

PRESENT: Mayor Mike Savage
Deputy Mayor Matt Whitman
Councillors: David Hendsbee
Lorelei Nicoll
Gloria McCluskey
Waye Mason
Jennifer Watts
Linda Mosher
Russell Walker
Stephen Adams
Brad Johns
Steve Craig
Tim Outhit

REGRETS: Councillors: Barry Dalrymple
Reg Rankin

STAFF: Mr. John Traves, Acting Chief Administrative Officer
Ms. Karen Brown, Municipal Solicitor
Mr. Kevin Arjoon, Municipal Clerk
Mr. Liam MacSween, Legislative Assistant

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

A video recording of this meeting is available: http://archive.isiglobal.ca/vod/halifax/archive_2016-01-13_live.mp4.html

The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to Council are available online: <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/160113cow-agenda.php>

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m., and adjourned at 3:56 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Savage called the meeting to order in Council Chambers, 3rd Floor City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

It was agreed by Committee of the Whole to move Item No. 7 – Office of the Auditor General up on the agenda as the first item of business.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – December 2 & 9, 2015

MOVED by Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Councillor Watts

THAT the minutes of December 2 & 9, 2015 be approved as circulated.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3. CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

This matter was dealt with later in the meeting, please see page 3.

7. OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL

The following documentation was before Committee of the Whole:

- A staff recommendation report and presentation dated January 13, 2016

i) Presentation

Mayor Savage invited Mr. Larry Munroe, Auditor General to provide a presentation respecting the Proposed 2016/17 Office of the Auditor General Budget and Business Plan.

Mr. Munroe provided a presentation respecting the Proposed 2016/17 Office of the Auditor General Budget and Business Plan. Mayor Savage thanked Mr. Munroe for his presentation.

ii) Public Submissions

Mayor Savage invited members of the public to address Committee of the Whole on the budget presentation. He called three times for speakers to come forward and address Committee of the Whole, there were none present.

iii) Debate

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Nicoll

THAT Committee of the Whole direct staff to proceed to prepare the 2016/17 Office of the Auditor General Budget and Business Plan as proposed in the accompanying presentation, incorporating additional direction provided by motion of Committee of the Whole for inclusion in the proposed HRM 16/17 Budget and Business Plan documents.

In response to a question from Councillor Hendsbee, Mr. Munroe advised that the current staffing level within the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) is sufficient to carry out the work of the office.

In response to a follow up question from Deputy Mayor Whitman, Mr. Munroe advised that the largest expenditure within the OAG is compensation. He advised that staff have performance standards and performance contracts based on best practices within the marketplace.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3. Chief Administrative Office

The following documentation was before Committee of the Whole:

- A staff recommendation report and presentation dated January 13, 2016
- A handout with a revised slide 3

i) Presentation

Mayor Savage invited Mr. John Traves, Acting Chief Administrative Officer and Mr. Steve Higgins, Coordinator to provide a presentation respecting the Proposed 2016/17 Chief Administrative Office Budget and Business Plan. Mr. Traves and Mr. Higgins provided a presentation with respect to the Proposed 2016/17 Chief Administrative Office Budget and Business Plan. Mayor Savage thanked Mr. Traves and Mr. Higgins for their presentation

ii) Public Submissions

Mayor Savage invited members of the public to address Community Council on the budget presentation. He called three times for speakers, there were none present.

iii) Debate

In response to a question from Deputy Mayor Whitman, Mr. Higgins advised that the budget is largely driven by wages. Mr. Traves advised that the budget process involves setting realistic but aggressive budget targets as mandated by Regional Council.

In response to a question from Councillor McCluskey, Mr. Higgins provided background information in relation to proposed staffing for the reception area of City Hall outlined in the Deputy Chief Administrative Office budget.

Councillor McCluskey requested further information in relation to the business functions of Government Relations and External Affairs (GREA) division. Ms. Maggie McDonald, Managing Director, GREA commented that the divisions focuses primarily on business planning and policy in the areas of diversity inclusion, public safety, economic development and Business Improvement Districts (BIDS).

In response to a follow up question from Councillor McCluskey, Mr. Bruce DeBaie, Managing Director of Corporate Communications advised that the Corporate Communications divisions is comprised of marketing, internal communications, public relations and the print shop. He advised that there has been a net reduction of staff positions within the area of marketing and design.

In response to a follow up question from Councillor Watts, Mr. Traves advised that a briefing note can be provided in relation to broadcast services of Regional Council, Standing Committee and Community Councils. He advised that information respecting services for the hearing impaired will be addressed in the briefing note.

In response to a follow up question from Councillor Watts, Ms. MacDonald advised that the diversity inclusion office is planning to include Aboriginal relations within the diversity inclusion framework. She advised that a briefing notecan be provided on the manner.

Councillor Karsten joined the meeting at 2:24 p.m.

Councillor Hendsbee noted that HRM's current mileage policy is below federal and provincial standards and inquired if there are plans to increase the mileage rate so that it is in line with provincial and federal standards.

Mr. Traves advised that a briefing note will be provided in relation to the HRM's mileage rate.

MOVED by Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Councillor Nicoll

THAT Committee of the Whole direct staff to proceed to prepare the 2016/17 Chief Administrative Budget and Business Plan as proposed in the accompanying presentation, incorporating additional direction provided by motion of Committee of the Whole for inclusion in the proposed HRM 16/17 Budget and Business Plan documents.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. Legal, Insurance and Risk Management Services

The following documentation was before Committee of the Whole:

- A staff recommendation report and presentation dated January 13, 2016.

i) Presentation

Mayor Savage invited Mr. John Traves, Acting Chief Administrative Officer to present, Legal, Insurance and Risk Management Services Proposed 2016/17 Budget and Business Plan. Mr. Traves introduced Mr. Martin Ward, Acting Director of Legal, Insurance, and Risk Management. Mayor Savage thanked Mr. Traves and Mr. Ward for their presentation.

ii) Public Submissions

Mayor Savage invited members of the public to address Committee of the Whole on the budget presentation. He called three times for speakers, there were none present.

iii) Debate

MOVED by Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Councillor Craig

THAT Committee of the Whole direct staff to proceed to prepare the 2016/17 Legal, Insurance and Risk Management Services Budget and Business Plan as proposed in the accompanying presentation, incorporating additional direction provided by motion of Committee of the Whole for inclusion in the proposed HRM 16/17 Budget and Business Plan documents.

Councillor McCluskey inquired if HRM solicitors are currently involved in reviewing assessment appeals

Mr. Ward advised that HRM currently has a senior staff lawyer working on assessment appeals and advised that the individual is experienced in the field.

In response to a question from Councillor Mason, Mr. Traves advised that the Charter review project is not moving as fast as he would like. He commented that he has been in contact with the Deputy Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations and provided commentary with respect to the resources required by both the province and HRM to conduct the review. He further noted that the province has hired a lawyer to work on the project but noted that it may be more reasonable to approach the review in sections as opposed to one large project.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

5. Human Resources

The following documentation was before Committee of the Whole:

- A staff recommendation report and presentation dated January 4, 2016

i) Presentation

Mayor Savage invited Ms. Catherine Mullally, Director of Human Resources to provide a presentation respecting the Proposed 2016/17 Human Resources Budget and Business Plan. Ms. Mullally provided a presentation in relation to the Proposed 2016/17 Human Resources Budget and Business Plan. Mayor Savage thanked Ms. Mullally for her presentation.

ii) Public Submissions

Mayor Savage invited members of the public to address Committee of the Whole on the budget presentation. He called three times for speakers, there were none present.

iii) Debate

MOVED by Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Councillor Karsten

THAT Committee of the Whole direct staff to proceed to prepare the 2016/17 Human Resources Services Budget and Business Plan as proposed in the accompanying presentation, incorporating additional direction provided by motion of Committee of the Whole for inclusion in the proposed HRM 16/17 Budget and Business Plan documents.

Councillor McCluskey inquired as to provisions within the budget to assist HRM employees with stress related absence.

Ms. Mullally noted that staff has revised the attendance support program to assist in addressing the health of HRM employees. She advised that HRM has an occupational health team within the Human Resources Business unit which works diligently to provide support to all HRM employees.

In response to a question from Councillor Hendsbee, Ms. Mullally advised that staff actively reviews retirement figures and is working on providing projections from a service efficiency perspective in terms of human capital requirements.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

6. Finance and Information Communication Technology (ICT)

The following documentation was before Committee of the Whole:

- A staff recommendation report and presentation dated January 13, 2016
- A handout with a revised slide 15

i) Presentation

Mayor Savage invited Ms. Amanda Whitewood, Chief Financial Officer to provide a presentation on the Proposed 2016/17 Finance and ICT Budget and Business Plan. Ms. Whitewood provided a presentation respecting the Proposed 2016/17 Finance and ICT Budget and Business Plan. Mayor Savage thanked Ms. Whitewood for her presentation.

ii) Public Submissions

Mayor Savage and invited members of the public to address Committee of the Whole on the budget presentation. He called three times for speakers, there were none present.

iii) Debate

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Karsten

THAT Committee of the Whole direct staff to proceed to prepare the 2016/17 Finance and ICT Budget and Business Plan as proposed in the accompanying presentation, incorporating additional direction provided by motion of Committee of the Whole for inclusion in the proposed HRM 16/17 Budget and Business Plan documents.

Councillor Watts requested further information with respect to updates to HRM's procurement policy and the halifax.ca website.

Ms. Whitewood advised that the procurement division within Finance and ICT is currently working on new Administrative Order and which is being reviewed with other business units. She commented that staff also wishes to provide a public interface with respect to the procurement policy and further liaise with provincial counterparts to ensure it aligns with provincial practices. She commented that staff should have an update ready by the late spring or early summer. She invited Ms. Donna Davis, Chief Information Officer to provide commentary on the website.

Ms. Donna Davis, Chief Information Officer advised that staff is anticipating that the re-design of the new website will be completed by the end of the summer.

In response to a question from Councillor Nicoll, Ms. Whitewood advised that a briefing note can be provided in relation to the strategic plan for ICT services.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7. Office of the Auditor General

This matter was dealt with earlier in the meeting. Please refer to page 2.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:56 p.m.

Kevin Arjoon
Municipal Clerk