



**REGIONAL WATERSHEDS ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES
March 12, 2020**

PRESENT: Linda Campbell, Chair
Tony Blouin
John Carter
Carol Cameron
Melissa Lee
Andrew Sullivan
Samantha Lutes
Jim Abraham

REGRETS: Emma Bocking, Vice Chair
Rose Featherstone
Ceo Gaudet
Laura McCallum

OTHERS PRESENT: Councillor Russell

STAFF: Cameron Deacoff, HRM Water Resource Specialist, Energy & Environment
Shannon Miedema, Manager of Energy and Environment
Sharon Chase, Legislative Support, Office of the Municipal Clerk

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

The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to the Committee are available online at Halifax.ca

The meeting was called to order at 5:10 p.m. and the Committee adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m. at HEMDCC Meeting Space, Main Floor Alderney Gate, 60 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth.

The Chair advised the Board that they did not have quorum and asked if they would like to move forward with the presentations and defer any items requiring decisions to the end of the meeting or until quorum was achieved. The Board agreed to move forward with presentations.

Items 3, 4 and 10.1 were moved to the end of the meeting.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair

This item was deferred until the next scheduled meeting, to ensure quorum and adequate membership present.

2. COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Chair informed the Board that Emma Bocking leads a water quality community group called the N.S. Water Caucus who would like to resume regular meetings. This group coordinates information and action on water quality issues and would provide a good networking opportunity.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED by Jim Abraham, seconded by Melissa Lee

THAT the minutes of September 19, 2019 be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

The agenda was approved as amended.

5. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

Jim Abraham would like the Board to take a closer look at the effects of Hurricane Dorian on bacteria outbreaks in HRM, in particular any enhanced risks for the coming summer. Abraham has some information on this topic that he can share with the Board.

6. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS- NONE

7. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS- NONE

8. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

8.1 Correspondence- None

8.2 Petitions- None

8.3 Presentations

8.3.1 Environment and Safety Sub Committee- Halifax Water

Kenda MacKenzie, Director Regulatory Services, provided a presentation to the Board. A copy of this presentation is on file.

Mackenzie reviewed the history of Halifax Water from 1945 to present day. They also shared how the utility is organized and regulated and the relationship with HRM. In addition to the main board there are various sub-committees, including an Environmental Safety Sub Committee, who operate similar to HRM's Standing Committees. This group have been asked to reach out to RWAB to create an opportunity for an open dialogue. MacKenzie shared maps of the water supply network in HRM, service districts and infrastructure. Pockwock Lake, Lake Major and Bennery Lake are provincially designated watersheds and subject to the Environment Act. There are Provincial Watershed Advisory Boards who make recommendations to the Minister of the Environment and Halifax Water. There is also regulation provided by the Halifax Regional Water Commission Act. The Municipal Government Act provides municipalities with the power to make by-laws to protect municipal drinking water supply; for example, requiring setbacks from watercourses and the creation of riparian buffers. Halifax Water works closely with HRM on their Regional Plans for development. Mackenzie then reviewed many examples of how Halifax Water protects watersheds in HRM.

Mackenzie answered Board members questions of clarification and confirmed that Halifax Water has been monitoring activity at Barry's Run and is always mindful of how water flows, discharges and drains. The Board thanked Mackenzie for their presentation.

9. INFORMATION ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD- NONE

10. REPORTS/DISCUSSIONS

10.1 STAFF

10.1.1 Proposed 2020 RWAB Meeting Schedule

The following was before the Board:

- Staff recommendation report dated January 29, 2020

MOVED by Samantha Lutes, seconded by Andrew Sullivan

THAT the Regional Watersheds Advisory Board approve the proposed 2020 meeting schedule as outlined in Attachment 1 of the staff recommendation report dated January 29, 2020.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

10.2.1 Shubenacadie and Sackville National Mitigation Program Projects

Youssef Habboush, Program Engineer Planning and Development, provided a presentation to the Board. A copy of this presentation is on file.

HRM is undertaking two studies funded by the Federal Government's National Disaster Mitigation Program. In 2015 HRM and Halifax Water completed a flood risk assessment study and identified the top ten sites with drainage issues. Sackville River and Shubenacadie Lakes were chosen for further study.

Habboush reviewed the Sackville Rivers Mitigation Planning Study. The four steps to the process are: risk assessment, flood plane mapping, mitigation planning and mitigation project investment. The first two steps are complete. Maps, photos and detail of this watershed were shared noting the impacts of development in the area. The modeling and methodology used for the study was reviewed. Examples of mitigation strategies being considered were explained in detail. Modelling for each strategy is being completed and will then be finalized into a recommendation report for presentation to Regional Council.

The Shubenacadie Lakes Floodplain Study was then reviewed. The same four step process will be used here: risk assessment, flood plane mapping, mitigation planning and mitigation project investment. The first step is complete. Modeling and methodology for this project was shared, highlighting an underwater

depth survey and a watershed delineation map. The next step is to produce a flood plane map, followed by an implementation plan in the form of a recommendation report for Regional Council.

The Board noted that factoring in climate change and extreme events is important. Wetlands as a part of the watershed provide a valuable protection. The Board shared how wetlands can act as a sponge and buffer. Vegetated ponds and swales can assist in increasing capacity. Solutions can include both natural and artificial systems. Habboush answered questions of clarification and noted that these studies were also being shared with the Province. The Board thanked Habboush for the presentation.

10.2 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

10.2.1 The Regional Centre Bike Network: Potential Watershed Impacts

This item will be deferred to the next scheduled meeting.

10.2.2 Port Wallace Gamble: The Real Estate Boom Meets Nova Scotia's Toxic Mine Legacy

The Halifax Examiner has published an in-depth review about the water quality of Lake Charles and Barry's Run and the legacy of the gold mining industry in the area. These bodies of water have the highest concentration of mercury and arsenic (from mine tailings) in all HRM. The Board discussed how they might support the work of staff. It was felt that having a staff presentation summarizing the issues facing the municipality could frame future discussions. This would include the affects on the Shubenacadie River, Lake Loon, Lake Charles and Barry's Run. It was noted that there is proposed development in Port Wallace. There has been lots of public discussion to date about this topic.

Shannon Miedema noted that the Province has done an analysis and will be sharing the results. Staff can provide the Board with context and backstory, and review HRM's public consultation and engagement policy. The Board was encouraged to learn more about the issue to be in a better position to inform and advise most effectively.

The Board asked how they might access this article, understanding that a subscription is required.

The Chair asked that a discussion on contaminated spaces in HRM be a topic for the next meeting.

11. ADDED ITEMS- NONE

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – April 9, 2020 at 5:00 p.m., HEMDCC Meeting Space,
Main Floor Alderney Gate, 60 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth.

13. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Sharon Chase
Legislative Support