



**HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES
January 20, 2016**

PRESENT: Councillor Linda Mosher, Chair
Mayor Mike Savage, Vice Chair
Deputy Mayor Matt Whitman
Councillors: Barry Dalrymple
David Hendsbee
Bill Karsten
Lorelei Nicoll
Gloria McCluskey
Waye Mason
Jennifer Watts
Russell Walker
Steve Adams
Reg Rankin
Steve Craig
Tim Outhit

REGRETS: Councillor Brad Johns

STAFF: Ms. Amanda Whitewood, Chief Financial Officer/ Director of Finance & ICT
Ms. Karen Brown, Acting Municipal Solicitor
Mr. Kevin Arjoon, Municipal Clerk
Ms. Sherryl Murphy, Deputy Municipal Clerk

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_2016-01-20_live.mp4.html*

*The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to Council are available online:
<http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/160120cow-agenda.php>*

1. CALL TO ORDER

Councillor Mosher, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – NONE

3. Planning and Development
i) Presentation
ii) Public Submissions
iii) Debate

The following was before Committee of the Whole:

- A staff recommendation report dated January 20, 2016 with attached presentation entitled 2016/17 Planning and Development Draft Budget and Business Plan

Mr. Bob Bjerke, Director, Planning and Development presented the draft budget and business plan for the Planning and Development Business Unit. Mr. Bjerke reviewed the suite of services provided by Planning and Development outlining both long range and day to day services. He went on to review the trends in development noting that development in the regional center is on target. Referring to key performance indicators and benchmarks particularly with regard to permit fees charged, Mr. Bjerke noted that a focus on operations will be required in 2016/17. He went on to review the work completed and ongoing in the 2015/16 Business Plan.

Mr. Bjerke reviewed the Planning and Development reorganization and provided detail on the top two priorities:

- Staying focused on the biggest difference
- Simpler, clearer frameworks

Councillor Hendsbee joined the meeting at 9:52 a.m.

Mr. Bjerke noted that as a result of the reorganization the need for additional positions has been identified. He went on to explain that recruitment of all these positions will not be accomplished in 2016, but will take 18 to 24 months. Mr. Bjerke recognized the existing vacancies in the Business Unit and noted that a concerted effort will be made to fill these within this budget year.

Mr. Bjerke reviewed the detail of the Planning and Development Operating Budget as found on Page 14 of the staff presentation. In conclusion he outlined the 2016/17 Planning and Development initiatives.

The Chair thanked Mr. Bjerke for his presentation and called for anyone wishing to address COW with regard to the budget. There being no speakers, Councillor Mosher opened debate.

MOVED by Mayor Savage, seconded by Councillor Karsten

That the Committee of the Whole direct staff to proceed to prepare the 2016/2017 Planning & Development 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.

Councillors discussed the 2016/17 Planning and Development budget. Highlights include:

- Developers are concerned with the length of time it takes to move an application through the process
- Developers might be willing to pay increased fees for speedier service
- Councillors support this plan as it moves toward a more efficient and timely process

- The HRM planning framework is very complex, with many layers which makes it more difficult for staff to respond to applications
- Realignment will provide opportunity for better communication of implications of development in neighbourhoods
- Internal coordination of parking matters and outstanding issues such as residential parking passes are matters that will be dealt with in 2016/17
- Secondary planning may not be the best tool for all community needs. Identification of what the exact problems/issues are and the appropriate report response which will get to results more quickly
- Traffic and wind studies should be responsibility of the HRM and charged back to the developer
- Encourage developing a relationship with private sector by providing opportunities for private planners to work with municipality and vice versa. There are opportunities for municipal staff to work with other municipalities for learning and development.

Councillor Outhit requested that staff prepare a chart of timelines in conjunction with the chart of fee costs provided on page 7 of the presentation.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Kevin Arjoon
Municipal Clerk