



**HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES
February 1, 2017**

PRESENT: Councillor Bill Karsten, Chair
Mayor Mike Savage
Deputy Mayor Steve Craig
Councillors: Steve Streach
David Hendsbee
Lorelei Nicoll
Sam Austin
Tony Mancini
Waye Mason
Lindell Smith
Shawn Cleary
Russell Walker
Richard Zurawski
Matt Whitman
Lisa Blackburn
Tim Outhit

REGRETS: Councillor Stephen Adams

STAFF: Ms. Amanda Whitewood, Director of Finance & ICT/CFO
Mr. John Traves, Municipal Solicitor
Ms. Sherryl Murphy, Deputy Municipal Clerk
Ms. Krista Vining, Legislative Assistant
Ms. Phoebe Rai, 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_2017-02-01_live.mp4.html

The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to Council are available online: <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/170201cow-agenda.php>

*The meeting was called to order at 9:36 a.m., and recessed at 11:53 a.m.
Council reconvened in at 12:30 p.m. and adjourned at 4:05 p.m.*

1. CALL TO ORDER

The following was before Council:

- A handout entitled Options for Consideration dated February 1, 2017

Councillor Karsten called the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m.

APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITONS AND DELETIONS

Councillor Karsten noted that Item 8 Human Resources was deferred to a future Committee of the Whole budget session.

Mayor Savage sought the addition of an item (1.1) to propose a motion on options to not increase penalties under the Parking Meter By-law (P-500), to which Council agreed.

Due to time constraints, Council agreed that items 7 and 9 would be considered at a future budget session.

1.1 Mayor Savage – Options to Not Increase Penalties under the Parking Meter By-law (P-500)

MOVED by Mayor Savage, seconded by Councillor Outhit

THAT Halifax Regional Council direct staff to bring further information and consider options so as not to increase penalties under the Parking Meter By-law (P-500), and if necessary, recommend options that achieve a balanced budget in 2017/2018.

Mayor Savage explained that consultation had not been held with the business community and that he did not support increasing fines without the service being improved. He asked staff to look at benchmarking with other cities and look at what happens when fines are increased, increases in technologies and parking options. Mayor Savage commented on the downtown being in a transition and seeing growth and not wanting to discourage people from coming downtown.

It was noted that staff would report back to Council for the 2017/18 budget.

Members discussed whether to increase fines with note being made parking regulations are abused because fines were lower than daily parking rates. In response to a question raised, staff indicated they would confirm with Council at a future meeting the Municipality's process around issuing multiple tickets (i.e. stacking). Members also commented on the need to reduce traffic and getting people downtown though other forms of transportation such as transit. Credit card and smart phone technology for payment of parking is an option which should be investigated.

Ms. Amanda Whitewood, Chief Financial Officer confirmed that when staff reports back to Council with the options list, they would remove just the revenue from meter fees and look at ways to close the gap in the 2017/18 budget.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – NONE

3. Office of the Auditor General

The following was before Council:

- A staff recommendation report dated January 17, 2017

Ms. Evangeline Colman-Sadd, Auditor General presented the Office of the Auditor General 2017/2018 Multi-Year Budget and Business Plan.

Councillor Karsten thanked Ms. Coleman-Sadd for her presentation.

MOVED by Councillor Zurawski, seconded by Councillor Whitman

THAT the Committee of the Whole direct staff to prepare the 2017/2018 Multi-year Office of the Auditor General Budget, including 2018/2019 in principle, as proposed in the accompanying presentation and consistent with the preliminary fiscal direction.

Council discussed the Auditor General Budget for 2017/18 and 2018/19 in principal with Ms. Colman-Sadd responding to questions.

The following information was identified as follow up:

- A request for report on how the recommendations from 2011/2012 would be followed up on
- That the plan for promoting work of the Office of the Auditor General to the general public be added to the items of focus for 2017/18

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Councillor Karsten called three times for members of the public to come forward and speak on the budget presentation. There were no speakers present.

4. Halifax Public Libraries

Councillor Mancini disclosed a conflict of interest for Item 4 Halifax Public Libraries at this time and took a seat in the gallery.

Councillor Smith noted that he was currently on leave from his position at the Halifax North Branch Library but having reviewed the budget, he did not see a conflict at this time.

The following was before Council:

- A staff recommendation report dated January 23, 2017

Ms. Asa Kachan, Chief Librarian & CEO, Halifax Public Libraries presented the Halifax Public Libraries 2017/2018 Multi-Year Budget and Business Plan.

Councillor Karsten thanked Ms. Kachan for her presentation and requested members of the public to come forward and speak on the budget.

Ms. Wendy MacDonald, resident of District 12 spoke in support of the January 23, 2017 staff report and to the programming at the Keshen Goodman Library. She pointed out that this was probably the busiest branch prior to the Central Library opening. Ms. MacDonald commented on how partnerships and volunteer groups are an important aspect of the community and Councillors reaching out to these groups to benefit the library.

MOVED by Councillor Zurawski, seconded by Deputy Mayor Craig

THAT Committee of the Whole direct staff to prepare the 2017/2018 Multi-year Halifax Public Libraries 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 2017/2018 Multi-year Budget and Business Plan documents.

Members commented on how libraries play a pivotal role in communities. Ms. Kachan responded to questions around community engagement, renewal of libraries, funding sources: Municipal, provincial, library generated revenue and grant-funding. She provided additional clarification on the increase options with the following points being noted:

- \$500,000 for upgrades to the Library Collection (i.e. multi-lingual and e-books collections); the e-book collection will not meet the demand created by the new user friendly website
- \$300,000 for updates to public technologies (i.e. computers for library users); working with ICT staff to develop a renewal strategy

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Council recessed at 11:53 a.m. and reconvened at 12:30 p.m.

Council agreed to consider item 6 next on the agenda.

6. Chief Administrative Office

The following was before Council:

- A staff recommendation report dated January 12, 2017
- A handout with revised slides 8, 9 and 23

Mr. Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer presented the Chief Administrative Office 2017/2018 Multi-Year Budget and Business Plan.

Councillor Karsten thanked Mr. Dubé for his presentation and requested members of the public to come forward and speak on the budget.

Mr. Colin May spoke to reserving funds to purchase the Blue Mountain Birch Cove lands, and he expressed the view that Council should ensure contracted workers receive more than minimum wage.

The Chair called for anyone else wishing to address Council; there being none, he advised that Council would continue with its discussion on the Chief Administrative Office budget.

MOVED by Councillor Blackburn, seconded by Councillor Nicoll

THAT the Committee of the Whole direct staff to prepare the 2017/2018 Multi-year Chief Administrative Office Business Unit Business Plan, including 2018/2019 in principle, as proposed in the accompanying presentation and consistent with the preliminary fiscal direction.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

MOVED by Mayor Savage, seconded by Councillor Nicoll

THAT the Committee of the Whole direct staff to add to the Options List the operating below budget option of structural alterations to the Chief Administrative Office Reporting Structure and the over budget options:

- **Increase election reserve funding to accommodate increasing election expenses in advance of 2020**
- **Increase International Partnership Activity**
- **Implementation French Translation Services of Municipal PSA's**
- **Additional Resources for the Access to Information Office**
- **Develop poverty reduction strategy**

- **Financial Support for Engage NS**
to be considered by the Committee of the Whole at a later date for inclusion in the 17/18 Multi-Year Budget Process, and to direct staff to provide an estimate of the two year budget implication.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Mr. Dubé and Mr. Kevin Arjoon, Municipal Clerk responded to questions of clarification. It was noted that the Access and Privacy Office is understaffed for the volume of requests it receives; however, work on digitizing records will help reduce processing times.

MOVED by Councillor Smith, seconded by Councillor Mancini

THAT the Committee of the Whole direct staff to add to the over the budget options to increase the Chief Administrative Office Budget under Government Relations & External Affairs for the Diversity and Inclusion office by up to \$60,000 for community outreach, engagement, and evaluation for the African Nova Scotian Affairs Integration office, Aboriginal Affairs, and Diversity and Inclusion.

A brief discussion ensued, with the Chief Administrative Officer noting that the Diversity and Inclusion Office will require funds in order to have more effective community outreach. Staff agreed to provide Councillors with additional information on the subject.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

5. Parks and Recreation

The following was before Council:

- A staff recommendation report dated January 23, 2017
- Correspondence from Guy Dumont dated January 31, 2017

Mr. Brad Anguish, Director, Parks & Recreation presented the Parks and Recreation 2017/2018 Multi-Year Budget and Business Plan.

Councillor Karsten thanked Mr. Anguish for his presentation and requested members of the public to come forward and speak on the budget.

Mr. Jeff Blair expressed support for the Community Facilities Master Plan. He commented that his organization doesn't currently hold tournaments in Halifax because the facilities are too spread out. Mr. Blair also indicated he felt the municipality had a shortage of indoor turf during the off-season, especially during the evening, and that he would support implementing removable goal posts.

Mr. Raymond Plourde, Dartmouth shared his support for parkland acquisition including the Blue Mountain Birch Cove areas as well as the Purcell's Cove backlands.

The Chair called for anyone else wishing to address Council; there being none, he advised that Council would continue with its discussion on the Parks and Recreation budget.

MOVED by Councillor Streach, seconded by Councillor Zurawski

THAT the Committee of the Whole direct staff prepare the 2017/2018 Multi-year Parks and Recreation Budget and Business Plan, including 2018/2019 in principle, as proposed in the accompanying presentation and consistent with the preliminary fiscal direction.

Mr. Anguish and Mr. Bruce Fisher, Manager of Financial Policy and Planning responded to questions of clarification from Council.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee

THAT staff provide a report analyzing the implications of an increase in the Parks and Recreation operating & capital budgets to 80% of municipal cost benchmarks by fiscal 2021/2022, increasing each of four years starting in fiscal 18/19, with funds to improve facility and field conditions, expand programming and grant funding for community events, arts, culture and heritage programming.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Mayor Savage and Councillor Streach left the meeting at 3:05 p.m.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Craig, seconded by Councillor Mason

THAT the Committee of the Whole add Volunteer Support Services to the Options List to be considered by the Committee of the Whole at a later date for inclusion in the 17/18 Multi-Year Budget Process, and to direct staff to provide an estimate of the two year budget implication.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

MOVED by Councillor Outhit, seconded by Councillor Mancini

THAT the Committee of the Whole add to the over budget Options List:

- **Jumpstart – Funding and Staff Wages: \$146,000**
- **Monitors On All-Weather Fields: \$60,000**
- **Employee Discount: \$15,000**
- **Parks State of Good Repair: \$76,000**

to be considered by the Committee of the Whole at a later date for inclusion in the 17/18 Multi-Year Budget Process, and to direct staff to provide an estimate of the two year budget implication.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

MOVED by Councillor Nicoll, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee

THAT the Committee of the Whole add to the Options List the operating below budget options of Reduced Mowing Area and Rationalize 8-10 Parks/Fields/Year, and the over budget options:

- **Increase Spring Mowing Frequency**
- **Improved Park/Field Maintenance**
- **Public Garden Extended Season Access**
- **Increase Contributions to Community Facilities**

to be considered by the Committee of the Whole at a later date for inclusion in the 17/18 Multi-Year Budget Process, and to direct staff to provide an estimate of the two year budget implication.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Councillors further requested information regarding the legacy debt in the Parks and Recreation Business Unit, to which Mr. Anguish agreed.

6. Chief Administrative Office

This matter was dealt with earlier in the meeting, see pages 4-5 for details.

7. Legal, Insurance and Risk Management Services

The following was before Council:

- A staff recommendation report dated January 18, 2017

Due to time constraints, this matter will be considered at a future budget session.

8. Human Resources

The following was before Council:

- A staff recommendation report dated January 18, 2017

As noted during the approval of the order of business, this matter will be considered at a future budget session.

9. Finance and Information, Communications and Technology

The following was before Council:

- A staff recommendation report dated January 23, 2017

Due to time constraints, this matter will be considered at a future budget session.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Kevin Arjoon
Municipal Clerk