



**HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES
November 14, 2017**

PRESENT:

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

STAFF:

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer
John Traves, Municipal Solicitor
Kevin Arjoon, Municipal Clerk
Liam MacSween, Legislative Assistant

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

The agenda, reports, supporting documents, information items circulated, and video (if available) are online at halifax.ca.

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. and adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Savage called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – NONE

3. 2017-2020 Multi-year Priority Outcome Update

The following was before Council:

- A staff recommendation report dated November 7, 2017

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer provided an overview of the 2017-2020 Multi-year Priority Outcome Update and introduced Maggie MacDonald, Managing Director of Government Relations and External Affairs to provide a presentation on the Economic Development Outcome area within the 2017-2020 Multi-year Priority Outcomes Update.

MacDonald provided clarification with respect to the following concerns identified by Council:

- HRM's rural broadband initiatives and opportunities to liaise with provincial and federal counterparts to bring high speed internet to rural communities within HRM.
- Using the Average Industrial Wage as a metric for measuring economic growth within the HRM.

Brad Anguish, Director of Parks, Recreation and Communities highlighted the following in response to concerns raised by Council:

- Provisions within the 2018/2019 budget for parkland acquisitions.
- The budgetary impacts of increased costs for trees and tree planting in relation to the Urban Forest Masterplan.
- The creation of an inventory of arts and cultural spaces in HRM to identify gaps and determine where further investment is needed.

Kelly Denty, Acting Director of Planning & Development provided further clarification with respect to agricultural zoning in HRM and the By-law Simplification project being undertaken by the Rural Planning team.

John Traves, Q.C, Director of Legal, Municipal Clerk, and External Relations provided a presentation with respect to the Governance and Engagement outcome area identified within the 2017-2020 Multi-year Priority Outcomes Update.

In response to questions of clarifications from members of Council, Traves provided a response with respect to changes to the commercial tax structure, public engagement including open data and open government initiatives, and Corporate Communications.

Jerry Blackwood, Acting Chief Financial Officer, clarified the following in response to concerns raised by Council:

- The Payment Card Industry Compliance (PCI) project has been undertaken to ensure that HRM adheres to new regulations respecting the acceptance of credit cards and protecting card holder information.
- Approximately 3-3.5 percent of Payment In lieu of Taxes (PILT) payments are outstanding. Staff are engaged in ensuring that PILT payments are resolved.
- The tax collection rate for the municipality is approximately 97 percent.
- The Financial Condition Index is a fiscal tool devised by the province as a Key Performance Indicator for municipalities to identify areas which may require further attention.

In response to a follow up question, Bruce Fisher, Manager of Financial Policy and Planning advised that staff will be providing recommendations with respect to commercial taxation and measures that can be enacted by Council through delegated authority from the province.

Bruce DeBaie, Managing Director of Corporate Communications provided commentary with respect to HRM's social media strategy and efforts by staff to reach those that do not feel fully engaged by the municipality.

Brad Anguish, Director Parks, Recreation, and Communities provided a presentation with respect to the Healthy, Livable Communities outcome area identified within the 2017-2020 Multi-year Priority Outcomes Update.

Anguish provided commentary with respect to the following concerns raised by Council:

- Late payments to local trails groups due to a required update service agreement between HRM and the Halifax Regional Trails Association.
- The extent of energy efficiency and environmental sustainability planning associated in the design of new recreation facilities.
- HRM's environmentally sustainable recreation programming.
- Public engagement initiatives undertaken by staff to promote HRM's Recreation programs.

In response to a question of clarification, Neera Ritcey, Public Relations and Communications Manager, Halifax Regional Police provided commentary with respect to the Independent Consultant's review of Halifax Regional Police practices related to street checks.

Shannon Miedema, Manager of Energy and Environment, provided clarification on the following concerns raised by Council:

- Staff updates to the Corporate Green House Reduction and the Community Energy Plans.
- Ongoing collaboration with federal and provincial partners with respect to emission mitigation opportunities for HRM.
- A forthcoming progress report to the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee in relation to the Solar City Program.
- The creation of a benchmarking program for general building performance in relation to the reduction Green House Gas Reductions and other environmental efficiencies.

Due to time constraints, Council agreed by consensus to continue the staff presentations and deliberation of the 2017-2020 Multi-year Priority Outcome Update at a Committee of the Whole meeting to be held on November 28, 2017 prior to Halifax Regional Council.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Kevin Arjoon
Municipal Clerk