



**BUDGET COMMITTEE  
(STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ON BUDGET)  
SPECIAL MEETING  
May 20, 2020**

**PRESENT:**

Mayor Mike Savage  
Deputy Mayor Lisa Blackburn  
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  
Paul Russell  
Tim Outhit

**STAFF:**

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer  
John Traves, Municipal Solicitor  
Jane Fraser, Chief Financial Officer  
Caroline Blair-Smith, Director, Human Resources  
Åsa Kachan, Chief Librarian and CEO, Halifax Public Libraries  
Chief Ken Stuebing, Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency  
Chief Dan Kinsella, Halifax Regional Police  
Carole MacDougall, Vice Chair, Board of Police Commissioners  
Sherryll Murphy, A/Municipal Clerk  
Andrea Lovasi-Wood, 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 or audio (if available) are online at [halifax.ca](http://halifax.ca).*

*The special meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. The Budget Committee moved into an In Camera (In Private) session at 10:04 and reconvened at 11:15 a.m. Budget Committee recessed at 12:09 p.m. and reconvened in at 1:01 p.m. Budget Committee adjourned at 3:46 p.m.*

## **1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. and Council moved into an In Camera (In Private) session.

## **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – NONE**

## **3. Proposed 2020/21 Budget Recast for COVID-19 Impacts (Continuation from May 19)**

The following was before Budget Committee:

- A staff recommendation report dated May 1, 2020
- A staff presentation dated May 12, 2020 entitled “2020/21 Recast Budget Discussion”
- A Councillor Request for Consideration Form from Councillor Mancini

The following motion from the May 12, 2020 meeting of the Budget Committee reads:

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Blackburn, seconded by Councillor Nicoll

**THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to revise the 2020/21 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets, as voted on by Regional Council’s Committee of the Whole on Budget at their February 12, 2020 meeting, using the revisions proposed in the staff report dated May 1, 2020 as summarized in Table 3, supported by attachment C and D.**

Caroline Blair-Smith, Director, Human Resources, spoke about proposed budget reduction strategies for Human Resources outlined in the staff report dated May 1, 2020 and answered questions.

Asa Kachan, Chief Librarian and CEO, spoke about proposed budget reduction strategies for Halifax Public Libraries as outlined in the staff report dated May 1, 2020 and answered questions. Kachan also discussed various elements of the Halifax Public Libraries’ COVID-19 pandemic response.

Chief Ken Stuebing, Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency, spoke about proposed budget reduction strategies to Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency as outlined in the staff report dated May 1, 2020. Chief Stuebing indicated that reductions were made to various non-compensation items including the Firefighters Assistance Program, volunteer recognition program, reduction to the ground, search and rescue grants, the closure of Station 11 and redeployments at other stations. Chief Stuebing advised that budget reductions will make it more difficult to meet the national fire response time of 14 firefighters in 8 minutes.

MOVED by Councillor Mancini, seconded by Councillor Whitman

**THAT the Budget Committee request a Supplementary Report from Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency to provide Regional Council with additional budget considerations of the proposed budget reduction for a reduction of \$4.5 million and \$3.5 million in comparison to the proposed \$5 million budget reduction.**

Councillor Mancini expressed concerns regarding service delivery, elimination of the Firefighters Assistance Program, the severe reduction to ground, search and rescue and increasing the reliance on volunteer fire fighting force for service in rural areas, such as Sheet Harbour. Current budget projections for Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency show a budget cut of \$5 million. By providing comparative budget projections based on \$4.5 million and \$3.5 million the Budget Committee can better review the

options and gain a better understanding of the implications for the current budget and determine the most cost-effective option while maintaining public safety standards.

Chief Stuebing answered Budget Committee's questions regarding proposed budget reductions and impacts.

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Not present: Councillor Karsten

**4. Board of Police Commissioners – 2020/2021 Halifax Regional Police Budget**

The following was before Budget Committee:

- A recommendation report from the Board of Police Commissioners dated May 14, 2020
- A Councillor Request for Consideration Form from Councillor Mancini

Chief Dan Kinsella, Halifax Regional Police, provided an overview of the Halifax Regional Police reductions to its' 2020-2012 budget outlined in the recommendation report dated May 14, 2020 and answered questions.

MOVED by Councillor Mancini, seconded by Deputy Mayor Blackburn

**THAT the Budget Committee request a Supplementary Report from Halifax Regional Police and the Board of Police Commission to provide Regional Council with additional budget considerations of the proposed budget reduction for a reduction of \$4.5 million and \$3.5 million in comparison to the proposed \$5 million budget reduction.**

Chief Kinsella answered questions regarding budget reductions and impacts. Frontline police service will be the priority while ensuring member wellness especially as HRM opens up with the relaxation of public health restrictions. Chief Kinsella answered questions regarding Community Relations Officers and School Liaison Officers and whether that service could be maintained if the budget was not reduced by \$5 million but by \$4.5 or \$3.5 million.

Carol MacDougall, Vice Chair, Board of Police Commissioners told the Budget Committee that the recommendation to consult with the Province to seek savings in the costs of RCMP services was being sought because of fairness. Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer, clarified that HRM was not seeking to open the RCMP contract but just to see if HRM can reduce any costs associated with RCMP services. Dubé advised it would be unlikely that HRM can realize any cost savings because it is a contractual relationship.

Jane Fraser, Chief Financial Officer answered questions to clarify how the vacancy management proposed in the Halifax Regional Police proposed budget reductions relates to the vacancy management measures proposed in Councillor Mason's motion made at the May 13, 2020 meeting of the Budget Committee.

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**5. IN CAMERA (IN PRIVATE)**

MOVED by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Mancini

**THAT Budget Committee convene to in camera to discuss the matter.**

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**5.1 PERSONNEL MATTER – Private and Confidential Report**

A matter pertaining to an identifiable individual or group.

This matter was considered at in camera (in private) session with no further action required.

**6. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 3:46 p.m.

Sherryl Murphy  
A/Municipal Clerk