



**HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL
(STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ON BUDGET)
SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES
June 9, 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
Chief Dan Kinsella, Halifax Regional Police
Jerry Blackwood, Director Corporate & Customer Services
Sherryl 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.

The special meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. Budget Committee moved into an In Camera (In Private) session at 10:47 a.m. and reconvened at 11:52 a.m. Budget Committee recessed at 12:10 p.m. and reconvened at 1:00 p.m. Budget Committee adjourned at 2:49 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. The Mayor gave a statement addressing anti-black racism.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – NONE

3. Proposed 2020-21 Budget and Business Plan

The following was before Budget Committee:

- A staff recommendation report dated May 1, 2020
- A staff presentation entitled '2020/21 Recast Budget Discussion'
- A staff recommendation report dated May 30, 2020
- A staff presentation entitled 'Proposed 2020/21 Budget and Business Plan'
- Correspondence re Halifax Regional Police from Robyn Schleihauf, Jillian Banfield, Katie Campbell, Margaret Drescher, Andrea D'Sylva, Stepheny Hunter (June 2, 2020 and June 3, 2020), Veronica Post, Lily Falk, Ella MacDonald, Florence Wallace, Nikki Belliveau, Laura Craig, Julie d'Entremont, Natalie Forth, Emily Jewer, Hannah Lowe, Liam Cormier, Gabrielle Deveau, Jessie Ecker, Stevie Fort, Jamie Hammond, Maggie Henry, Evelyn Hornbeck, Anita Joh, Shannon Landovskis, Katharine MacDonald, Caitlyn Mearns, Daniel Dominic Menard, Erin Murphy, Emily Ross, Jane Scott, Ceilidh Sutherland, Brenna Thibodeau, Katie Tower, Ryan Abrams, James Boyle, Corey Hinchey, Katerina Lytras, Helen MacLeod, Samuel Shannon, Kimberly Sweeny MES, JD, Madeline Tang, Ruby Watts, Jana Wicha, Brianne Bezanson, John Wesley Chisholm, Katelyn d'Entremont, Teresa Fisher, Nicole Giacomantonio, Maya Makhoul, Sarah Manchon, Skylar Martini, Scott Tower, Julie van der Hoop, PhD, Souraya Zreik, Joanna Bull, Rachel Filiatrault, Caroline Jonah, Sasha Kosanov, Claire Matthews, Kelsey McKenzie, Joanne Yang, Camille Brockmann, Marc Comeau, Holly Davy, Blake Eaglestone, Jane Harris, Carly LeCocq, Stephanie MacDonald, BHSc, RMT, Camden MacLean, Samantha Bonin, Katherine Carey, Nina Cherry, Marc Comeau, Kayla de Groot, Laura Dingwell, Stewart Ducklow, Jaya Fahey, Jennifer Galesloot, Ashley Hamilton, Sara Hamm, Brin Jones, Clark MacIntosh, Katie MacLean, Nicole Maunsell, Kate Meagher, Debbie Miller, Wren Morris, Kim Mundle, Benjamin Nycum, Reverend Margaret Sagar, Maggie Scott, Stephanie Sellars, Erin Sirett, Neil Andrew Stevens, Ursula Snyder, Stephen Terauds, Ainslee Umlah, Timothy R. Walker, Ph.D., Brody Weaver, David Whittaker
- Correspondence re African Nova Scotian Community from Irvine Carvery
- Correspondence re Recreation trails funding from Bob & Wendy McDonald and Charles Sutton, President Mountain Bike Halifax

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.

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) presented a summary of the Proposed 2020/21 Budget and Business Plan. Dubé recognized the challenges that HRM is experiencing because of the Covid 19 pandemic and the resultant global recession. HRM is experiencing reductions to operating

revenue with reductions to its main revenue streams; property taxes, deed transfer tax and transit fares. These reductions are predicted to continue until the economy recovers.

HRM's proposed budget aims to be prudent in the use of our resources but allows for flexibility as HRM aims to continue to invest in the economy through capital investment, pursuing infrastructure opportunities and opening up HRM services to continue dependable service delivery. Operating revenue is currently \$955 million. In 2020/21 HRM projects an increase to average residential taxes of 1.4% from assessment growth not from an increase to residential tax rate. The average commercial property tax rose 1.0% in value due to 0.4% increase in rate and assessment increases. HRM's financial strategy for resilience is based upon prudence, flexibility and balance and stability.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Blackburn, seconded by Councillor Nicoll

THAT the Budget Committee amend the Main Motion directing 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 30, 2020 as summarized in Tables 1, 2 and 3, supported by attachment C and D as previously amended through the Budget process.

To further direct the Chief Administrative Officer to:

1. Forgo the planned \$12 million contribution to the Strategic Capital Reserve Q606 for fiscal 2020/21 and redirect this amount to the Capital Reserve Q526 to be used to cost share in Infrastructure Programs that may be established by Federal and/or Provincial Governments in response to COVID19.

2. Utilize \$12.6 million in Fiscal Services to enhance municipal services that have been reduced due to COVID-19 and not currently budgeted for and/or to address adverse economic conditions as a result of COVID-19.

And:

THAT the Budget Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council adopt the revised Resolution for Approval of Operating and Capital Budgets and Tax Rates for Fiscal 2020/21 as set out in Schedule 1 of the staff report dated May 30, 2020.

MOVED by Councillor Cleary, seconded by Councillor Smith

THAT the motion be amended to rescind Council's decision to reserve fund the armoured vehicle and return the funds, \$500,000, to the Vehicle Fleet and Equipment Reserve Q531.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED. (16 in favour, 1 against)

In favour: Mayor Savage, Deputy Mayor Blackburn, Councillors Streach, Hendsbee, Karsten, Nicoll, Austin, Mancini, Mason, Smith, Cleary, Walker, Zurawski, Whitman, Russell, Outhit

Against: Councillors Adams

MOVED by Councillor Cleary, seconded by Councillor Smith

THAT Budget Committee include the following funding in the recast 2020-21 budget: \$53,500 in programming dollars for the Office of Diversity & Inclusion: \$25,000 for special projects plus \$11,000 to support Business Units to advance Public Safety Strategy actions in the Public Safety Office, and use the remaining funds \$300,000 to support anti-Black racism efforts and initiatives with funding to come from the General Contingency Reserve Q421.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Councillors expressed a desire that the Wortley Report recommendations be used as a consideration when preparing future police budgets.

MOVED by Councillor Russell, seconded by Councillor Outhit

That the motion be amended to include \$187,000 to allow for the Customer Service Centre at the Acadia School to remain open with funding from the General Contingency Reserve Q421.

Jane Fraser, Chief Financial Officer indicated this amendment to the main budget motion would have no impact on tax rate but impacts upon reserves.

MOTION PUT AND DEFEATED. (4 in favour, 13 against)

In favour: Deputy Mayor Blackburn, Councillors Hendsbee, Russell, Outhit

Against: Mayor Savage, Councillors Streach, Karsten, Nicoll, Austin, Mancini, Mason, Smith, Cleary, Walker, Adams, Zurawski, Whitman

THAT the Budget Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council adopt the revised Resolution for Approval of Operating and Capital Budgets and Tax Rates for Fiscal 2020/21 as set out in Schedule 1 of the staff report dated May 30, 2020 with an amendment to rescind Council's decision to reserve fund the armored vehicle and return the funds, \$500,000, to the Vehicle Fleet and Equipment Reserve Q531 and further to include the following funding in the recast 2020-21 budget: \$53,500 in programming dollars for the Office of Diversity & Inclusion: \$25,000 for special projects plus \$11,000 to support Business Units to advance Public Safety Strategy actions in the Public Safety Office:, and use the remaining funds \$300,0000 to support anti-Black racism efforts and initiatives with funding to come from the General Contingency Reserve Q421.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED (16 in favour, 1 against)

In favour: Mayor Savage, Deputy Mayor Blackburn, Councillors Streach, Hendsbee, Karsten, Nicoll, Austin, Mancini, Mason, Smith, Cleary, Walker, Adams, Zurawski, Russell, Outhit

Against: Councillor Whitman

4. IN CAMERA (IN PRIVATE)

MOVED by Councillor Outhit, seconded by Councillor Mancini

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

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:49 p.m.

Sherryl Murphy
A/Municipal Clerk