



**BUDGET COMMITTEE
(STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ON BUDGET)
MINUTES
February 3, 2023**

PRESENT: Councillor Paul Russell, Chair
 Deputy Mayor Sam Austin
 Councillors: Cathy Deagle Gammon
 David Hendsbee
 Becky Kent
 Trish Purdy
 Tony Mancini
 Waye Mason
 Lindell Smith
 Shawn Cleary
 Kathryn Morse
 Patty Cuttell
 Iona Stoddard
 Pam Lovelace
 Lisa Blackburn
 Tim Outhit

REGRETS: Mayor Mike Savage

STAFF: Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer
 Jerry Blackwood, Executive Director of Finance & Asset Management/Chief
 Financial Officer
 John Traves, Executive Director of Legal & Legislative Services/Municipal
 Solicitor
 Iain MacLean, Municipal Clerk
 Annie Sherry, 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 9:31 a.m. and recessed at 12:04 p.m. Budget Committee convened to In Camera (In Private) session at 1:01 p.m. and reconvened at 2:36 p.m. Budget Committee adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m. and acknowledged that the meeting took place in the traditional and ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people, and that we are all treaty people.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – NONE

3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

Additions: None

Deletions: None

MOVED by Councillor Kent, seconded by Councillor Deagle Gammon

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Not present: Mayor Savage, Councillors Hendsbee, Purdy, Cleary

4. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

Councillor Hendsbee declared a conflict of interest for Item 6.1, section 3 of the motion as amended, as an immediate family member is a crossing guard.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Madison Geldart, East Preston, spoke to concerns about the transparency of how municipal tax dollars are spent, rate increases for Halifax Transit, proposed 2023/24 budget cuts, and noted that community members should have more input in the budget process. Geldart encouraged Budget Committee to allocate funding to improve accessibility and reliability of Halifax Transit, and to consider implementing Finnish housing support models to address the housing crisis in the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM).

Hil Hamilton, Halifax, spoke to concerns with a lack of transparency and context within the proposed Halifax Regional Police (HRP) and Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) budget and suggested that key service deliverables should be outlined and met in order for funding be considered. Hamilton highlighted that re-prioritizing and re-strategizing funding requires a comprehensive breakdown of service delivery, that the information within the proposed budget did not provide a comprehensive breakdown, and encouraged Budget Committee to reject the proposed budget by sending it back to the Board of Police to request more information. Hamilton responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee.

Kate MacDonald, Halifax, spoke to the act of defunding the police being a matter of shifting funding to other areas that support community well-being, that community members are allowed to disagree with allocating more funding for the HRP and RCMP without quantifying their ask to do so, and that policing is a race-related issue that has been detrimental to the Black community. MacDonald encouraged Budget Committee to consider shifting funding for the police into housing, innovative healthcare solutions, culturally relevant mental health supports, long-term care facilities and senior supports, disability justice, and education.

Willa Oaks, Halifax, spoke to concerns with accessibility of the meeting space, racism within the police, salary levels, and a vote of non-confidence in HRP's leadership. Oaks noted the municipality has a responsibility to allocate public funds to services that are in the best interest of their residents and encouraged Budget Committee to allocate funding to public transit, urban green spaces, safer roads, housing, mental health services, youth and arts and culture programming, public libraries, and to support frontline and community workers providing life-saving care.

Carmel Farahbakhsh, District 7, spoke to their opposition to the proposed HRP and RCMP budget increase, the importance of arts and culture, accessibility, and community safety within the HRM, concerns with proposed 2023/24 budget reductions impacting the social determinants of health of community members, and a non-confidence vote in HRP's leadership. Farahbakhsh suggested that allocating additional funding to the HRP and RCMP was not in alignment with the intention of Bill 96 – *The Dismantling Racism and Hate Act* and encouraged Budget Committee to consider shifting funding to community organizations for emergency mental health support, housing, harm reduction, and addictions.

Evan Kirby, Dartmouth, spoke to concerns with proposed 2023/24 budget cuts to Halifax Transit and bike lanes, and the impacts on pedestrian safety when not prioritized in budgets. Kirby suggested that green solutions should be explored when defunding the police.

Colin May, Dartmouth, spoke to homicide rates in the HRM from 1997 to present with aid of a document displayed for the Committee. May noted that the HRP deals with the majority of homicides in the area and encouraged Budget Committee to work with their Members of the Legislative Assembly and Members of Parliament to address the interrelated factors that contribute to violent crime.

Lou Campbell, District 7, spoke to their opposition to the proposed HRP and RCMP budget and encouraged Budget Committee to shift funding to improve an underfunded transit system, mental health emergency response, public libraries, safer cycling, help the unhoused population, and to work with other levels of government in the process.

6. REPORTS

6.1 Halifax Regional Police (HRP) and Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)

The following was before Budget Committee:

- Board of Police Commissioners report dated January 31, 2023
- Private and confidential staff report dated January 11, 2023
- Correspondence from Heather Baglole, Jim Hoskins, Kyle Cunjak, Mark Ring, Bob Found, Kyle Rhyno, and Rachele Manett
- Handout titled, "Budget Adjustment List Summary" dated February 3, 2023

Councillor Becky Kent, Chair, Board of Police Commissioners, Chief Dan Kinsella, Halifax Regional Police, Chief Superintendent Jeffrey Christie, Officer in Charge, Halifax District Royal Canadian Police, Inspector Michael O'Flynn, Halifax District Royal Canadian Police, and Staff Sergeant Lynden Morrison, Halifax District Royal Canadian Police gave a presentation and responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee.

John Traves, Executive Director of Legal & Legislative Services/Municipal Solicitor responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Mancini, seconded by Councillor Lovelace

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to incorporate the Halifax Regional Police/Royal Canadian Mounted Police (HRP-RCMP) proposed 2023/24 Budget and Business Plan, as set out and discussed in the accompanying plan and supporting presentation, into the Draft 2023/24 Operating Budget.

Chief Dan Kinsella, Halifax Regional Police, responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Mancini, seconded by Councillor Kent

THAT the motion be amended to include a new section that reads as follows:

- 2. Add the approval of a Police Psychologist position and the conditional additional authorization of the resulting increase in the Police budget to the Budget Adjustment List.**

Chief Dan Kinsella, Halifax Regional Police, Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer and John Traves, Executive Director of Legal & Legislative Services/Municipal Solicitor responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee.

Councillor Outhit proposed to add, "and an Occupational Health and Safety Nurse" after "Police Psychologist" and strike, "the Police budget to the Budget Adjustment List" to replace it with, "either the Police budget or the Draft 2023/24 Operating Budget to the Budget Adjustment List" at the end of the motion. As provided for in section 53 (2) of Administrative Order One, *Respecting the Procedures of the Council*, the amendment was accepted as friendly.

The motion now read:

MOVED by Councillor Mancini, seconded by Councillor Kent

THAT the motion be amended to include a new section that reads as follows:

- 2. Add the approval of a Police Psychologist and an Occupational Health and Safety Nurse position and the conditional additional authorization of the resulting increase in either the Police budget or the Draft 2023/24 Operating Budget to the Budget Adjustment List.**

Chief Dan Kinsella, Halifax Regional Police responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee and noted that additional information on the work of the reintegration officer/program funded through Budget 2022/23 could be provided through a staff report.

Deputy Chief Reid McCoombs, Halifax Regional Police, responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee and noted that a psychologist would not be assigned to treat individual employees, but to assist in crisis situations and onboarding.

Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Smith

THAT the vote on the motion be deferred to after the In Camera (In Private) session.

MOTION TO DEFER PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Not present: Mayor Savage

Chief Dan Kinsella, Halifax Regional Police, and Chief Superintendent Jeffrey Christie, Officer in Charge, Halifax District Royal Canadian Police responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Kent, seconded by Councillor Stoddard

THAT Budget Committee convene to In Camera (In Private) to discuss Confidential In Camera Handout re: Item 6.1.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Not present: Mayor Savage

MOVED by Councillor Mancini, seconded by Councillor Kent

THAT the motion be amended to include a new section that reads as follows:

- 2. Add the approval of a Police Psychologist and an Occupational Health and Safety Nurse position and the conditional additional authorization of the resulting increase in either the Police budget or the Draft 2023/24 Operating Budget to the Budget Adjustment List.**

MOTION TO AMEND PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Not present: Mayor Savage, Councillor Cleary

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Stoddard

THAT the motion be amended to include a new section that reads as follows:

- 3. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to provide a briefing note regarding the potential transfer of management of school crossing guards out of Halifax Regional Police to Halifax Regional Municipality to the Budget Adjustment List.**

Councillor Hendsbee was recused from the meeting during consideration of this item having declared a conflict on interest in the matter, as an immediate family member is a crossing guard.

John Traves, Executive Director of Legal & Legislative Services/Municipal Solicitor responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee.

MOTION TO AMEND PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Not present: Mayor Savage, Councillor Hendsbee

Councillor Hendsbee rejoined the meeting at this time.

MOVED by Councillor Lovelace seconded by Councillor Kent

THAT the motion be amended to include a new section that reads as follows:

- 4. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare a briefing note and add the potential transfer of Victim Services out of Halifax Regional Police budget to Halifax Regional Municipality and any resulting impact to the Budget Adjustment List.**

Jerry Blackwood, Executive Director of Finance & Asset Management/Chief Financial Officer responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee and highlighted the difference in processes between transferring a service from one budget line to another and the reduction of a service.

John Traves, Executive Director of Legal & Legislative Services/Municipal Solicitor, Chief Dan Kinsella, Halifax Regional Police, and Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee.

MOTION TO AMEND PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Not present: Mayor Savage, Councillor Stoddard

Chief Dan Kinsella, Halifax Regional Police, and Deputy Chief Reid McCoombs, Halifax Regional Police responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Deagle Gammon, seconded by Councillor Cuttell

THAT the motion be amended to include alternative motion 1 from the staff report dated January 31, 2023, as a new section that reads as follows:

- 5. Include Alternative 1, an increase of \$716,208 for four RCMP Regular Member positions as outlined the Briefing Note BN013 within the proposed 2023/24 RCMP budget to the Budget Adjustment List as an expense over budget option for consideration.**

John Traves, Executive Director of Legal & Legislative Services/Municipal Solicitor responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee and noted that the final direction on this matter would occur at Regional Council and inform RCMP service level agreement contract negotiations.

Chief Superintendent Jeffrey Christie, Officer in Charge, Halifax District Royal Canadian Police, Inspector Greg Robertson, Halifax Regional Police, and Superintendent Greg Mason, Halifax Regional Police responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee.

MOTION TO AMEND PUT AND PASSED. (13 in favour, 3 against)

In favour: Budget Committee Chair Russell, Councillors Deagle Gammon, Hendsbee, Kent, Purdy, Mancini, Mason, Smith, Cuttell, Stoddard, Lovelace, Blackburn, Outhit

Against: Deputy Mayor Austin, Councillors Cleary, Morse

Not present: Mayor Savage

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Austin, seconded by Councillor Mancini

THAT the motion be amended to include a new section that reads as follows:

- 6. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer provide a briefing note and add the potential transfer of the Lake Patrol from of the Halifax Regional Police to Halifax Regional Municipality and any resulting impact on the Halifax Regional Police Budget to the Budget Adjustment List.**

Chief Dan Kinsella, Halifax Regional Police, and Deputy Chief Reid McCoombs, Halifax Regional Police responded to questions of clarification Budget Committee.

MOTION TO AMEND PUT AND PASSED. (14 in favour, 1 against)

In favour: Deputy Mayor Austin, Councillors Deagle Gammon, Hendsbee, Kent, Purdy, Mancini, Mason, Smith, Cleary, Morse, Cuttell, Stoddard, Lovelace, Outhit

Against: Budget Committee Chair Russell

Not present: Mayor Savage, Councillor Blackburn

Chief Dan Kinsella, Halifax Regional Police responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Kent, seconded by Councillor Cleary

THAT the motion be amended to include a new section that reads as follows:

- 7. Include an increase of \$153,900 in the administration fee built into extra duty rates by 7% (from 3% to 10%) to the Budget Adjustment List.**

John Traves, Executive Director of Legal & Legislative Services/Municipal Solicitor, and Jerry Blackwood, Executive Director of Finance & Asset Management/Chief Financial Officer responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee regarding options for exploring a tiered increase system for not-for-profits.

Councillor Cuttell proposed to add, "including options for a tiered system" to the motion. As provided for in section 53 (2) of Administrative Order One, *Respecting the Procedures of the Council*, the amendment was accepted as friendly.

The motion now read:

MOVED by Councillor Kent, seconded by Councillor Cleary

THAT the motion be amended to include a new section that reads as follows:

- 7. Include an increase of \$153,900 in the administration fee built into extra duty rates by 7% (from 3% to 10%) including options for a tiered system to the Budget Adjustment List.**

Jerry Blackwood, Executive Director of Finance & Asset Management/Chief Financial Officer, and Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee.

MOTION TO AMEND PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Not present: Mayor Savage, Councillor Blackburn

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Lovelace

THAT the consideration of the motion for Item 6.1 be deferred until after discussion of the Budget Adjustment List.

MOTION TO DEFER PUT AND PASSED.

Not present: Mayor Savage, Councillor Blackburn

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Iain MacLean
Municipal Clerk