



**AUDIT & FINANCE STANDING COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
January 15, 2016**

PRESENT: Councillor Linda Mosher, Chair  
Councillor Bill Karsten, Vice - Chair  
Councillor Barry Dalrymple  
Councillor Gloria McCluskey  
Councillor Reg Rankin  
Councillor Steve Craig  
Mayor Mike Savage

STAFF: Ms. Amanda Whitewood, Chief Financial Officer  
Mr. John Traves, Acting Chief Administrative Officer  
Ms. Karen Brown, Acting Municipal Solicitor  
Mr. Liam MacSween, Legislative Assistant

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

*The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to are available online:  
<http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/SCfinance/160115afsc-agenda.php>*

*The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. and adjourned at 11:19 p.m.*

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order in Council Chambers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

- **Election of Chair and Vice-Chair**

Councillor Karsten thanked members of the Audit & Finance Standing Committee and requested that the Legislative Assistant call for nominations for the position of Chair. The Legislative Assistant opened the floor for nominations for the position of Chair of the Audit & Finance Standing Committee.

MOVED by Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Councillor Karsten

**THAT Councillor Mosher be nominated as Chair of the Audit & Finance Standing Committee. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

The Legislative Assistant called three times for further nominations, there were no further nominations.

MOVED by Councillor Rankin, seconded by Mayor Savage

**THAT nominations cease. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Councillor Mosher was elected Chair of the Audit & Finance Standing Committee.

Councillor Mosher thanked members of the Audit & Finance Standing Committee and opened the floor for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair.

MOVED by Councillor Rankin, seconded by Councillor Craig

**THAT Councillor Karsten be nominated for the position of Vice-Chair of the Audit & Finance Standing Committee. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Councillor Mosher called three times for further nominations. There were no further nominations for the position of Vice-Chair.

MOVED by Councillor Rankin, seconded by Councillor Dalrymple

**THAT nominations cease. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Councillor Karsten was elected as Vice-Chair of the Audit & Finance Standing Committee.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES –October 21, November 18 & December 16, 2015**

MOVED by Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Councillor Rankin.

**THAT the minutes of October 21, November 18 & December 16, 2015, 2015 be approved as presented.**

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

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

Additions: none.

MOVED by Councillor Karsten, seconded by Councillor McCluskey

**THAT the agenda be approved as presented.**

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

- 4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES**
- 5. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS**
- 6. MOTIONS OF RECONSIDERATION – NONE**
- 7. MOTIONS OF RESCISSION – NONE**
- 8. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE**
- 9. NOTICES OF TABLED MATTERS – NONE**
- 10. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS – NONE**
- 11. INFORMATION ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD – NONE**
- 12. REPORTS**
  - 12.1 STAFF – NONE**
  - 12.2 OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL**
    - 12.2.1 A Performance Review of the Management of Halifax Regional Municipality’s Reserve Funds©**

The following was before the committee:

- *A report from the office of the Auditor General dated Friday, January 15, 2016.*

Mr. Larry Munroe, Auditor General, provided a presentation with respect to a performance review of the management of Halifax Regional Municipality’s Reserve Fund.

Councillor Mosher thanked Mr. Munroe and requested questions of clarification from members of the Audit & Finance Standing Committee.

In response to a follow up question from Councillor Rankin, Mr. Munroe advised that there are many positive aspects to the use of reserves, particularly given the strong financial position of the municipality. He advised that an area for improvement can be found in establishing stronger business cases for the use of reserves to help mitigate risk.

In response to a comment by Councillor Craig, Ms. Amanda Whitewood, Chief Financial Officer noted that Office of the Auditor General worked very closely with staff in the preparation and field work for his report. She referenced Administrative Order 2014-015-ADM, Respecting Reserve Funding Strategies as staffs guiding document with respect to the usage of reserves and advised that the mechanics to support the reporting, are displayed and discussed in the Administrative Order. She advised that HRM is in a strong financial position and noted that staff will strive to continue to implement the recommendations as outlined in the Auditor General’s report.

In response to a question from Mayor Savage, Mr. Munroe advised that overall that HRM's reserve strategy works quite well but identified areas of improvement, particularly in the area of business cases which could benefit from stronger procedures and processes. He advised that this would be a measure of quality stewardship.

Further discussion ensued with Mr. Munroe acknowledging members the Auditor General's Office staff for their work on the presentation and report.

Councillor Mosher thanked Mr. Munroe and staff from the Office of the Auditor General for the report and presentation.

**12.3 INVESTMENT POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE – NONE**

**12.4 GRANT COMMITTEE – NONE**

**12.5 SPECIAL EVENTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE – NONE**

**12.6 MEMBERS OF THE AUDIT & FINANCE STANDING COMMITTEE – NONE**

**13. MOTIONS – NONE**

**14. IN CAMERA (IN PRIVATE)**

**14.1 Approval of In Camera Minutes – December 16, 2015**

The following motion was passed in public session:

MOVED by Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Mayor Savage

**THAT the Audit & Finance Standing committee approved the minutes of December 16, 2015 as circulated.**

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**15. ADDED ITEMS**

**16. NOTICES OF MOTION – NONE**

**17. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Councillor Mosher called three times for members of the public to address the Audit & Finance Standing Committee. There were no speakers present.

**18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – February 12, 2016**

**19. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11:19 a.m.

Liam MacSween  
Legislative Assistant