



**ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY STANDING COMMITTEE
MINUTES
December 6, 2018**

PRESENT: Councillor Tony Mancini, Chair
Councillor Richard Zurawski, Vice Chair
Councillor David Hendsbee
Councillor Shawn Cleary
Councillor Lisa Blackburn
Councillors Steve Streach

STAFF: Kelly Denty, Director, Planning & Development
Sara Knight, Solicitor
David Perusse, 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 1:00 p.m. and adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Legislative Assistant called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

1.1 Annual Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

The Legislative Assistant called for nominations for the position of Chair of the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Cleary, seconded Councillor Mancini

THAT Councillor Zurawski be nominated for the position of Chair of the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

The Legislative Assistant called three times for any further nominations. There being none, Councillor Zurawski was declared Chair of the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee.

Councillor Zurawski took the Chair at 1:02 p.m.

The Chair then called for nominations for the position of Vice Chair of the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Blackburn, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee,

THAT Councillor Cleary be nominated for the position of Vice Chair of the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

The Chair called three times for any further nominations. There being none, Councillor Cleary was declared Vice Chair of the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 21, 2018

MOVED by Councillor Blackburn, seconded by Councillor Streach

THAT the minutes of November 21, 2018 be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

Additions:

15.1 Deputy Mayor Mancini - Penalties for Illegal Dumping

Information Item 3. Air Conditioner Disposal at Household Special Waste Depots

Deputy Mayor Mason requested that Item 10. Correspondence, Petitions & Delegations, as well as Item 17. Public Participation, be moved up to take place prior to Item 8. Consideration of Deferred Business.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Mancini, seconded by Councillor Cleary

THAT the agenda be approved as amended.

Two-third majority vote required.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES - NONE

5. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS - NONE

6. MOTIONS OF RECONSIDERATION – NONE

7. MOTIONS OF RESCISSION – NONE

8. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS

8.1 Single-use Item Reduction Strategy

The following was before the Standing Committee:

- A staff recommendation report dated November 7, 2018
- A staff presentation titled “Single-Use Plastics in HRM”
- Correspondence submitted by Tara Wittchen, Bob Found, James Boyer, Violet Rosengarten, Kyle Wagner, and Kate Pepler.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Mancini, seconded by Councillor Cleary

THAT the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee recommends that Regional Council direct staff to:

- 1. Collaborate with the industrial, commercial and institutional (ICI) sector to develop a voluntary waste reduction strategy for the consumption of single-use items focusing on plastic carry out bags, utensils, cups, containers, straws and other waste items that may be identified through this collaboration, subject to approval of the necessary program funding as part of the 19/20/21 budget;**
- 2. Initiate an education campaign for residents and the ICI sector focused on the reduction of single-use plastics;**
- 3. Consult with industry, internal stakeholders, the public and the Regulatory Modernization Advisory Committee on the development of a regulatory framework required to prohibit the distribution of single-use plastics in the Halifax Regional Municipality, should the initial voluntary approach fail to achieve acceptable results by December 31, 2019; and**
- 4. Review and update the 2009 HRM Corporate Guidelines for Greening Meetings and Catering Requirements.**

Shannon Miedema, Energy & Environment Program Manager, and Matthew Keliher, Manager, Solid Waste, provided the Standing Committee with a presentation on the proposed Single-use Item Reduction Strategy. Keliher provided the Standing Committee with statistics on the amount of single-use plastic waste that makes it into HRM landfills. Speaking to the staff recommendation for a voluntary approach, they noted that regulation would not be the first option when there are unexplored alternatives, which could include various voluntary reduction strategies.

Responding to questions from members of the Standing Committee, Keliher and Miedema noted that the mechanism for any regulatory ban would be through a by-law which would identify single-use items that are not permitted. They further noted that the by-law would be enforced by By-law enforcement officers or possibly police. Keliher further noted that HRM does not have the jurisdiction to apply a fee to single-use plastics.

Speaking to the impact of the Chinese import ban on plastics, Keliher noted that HRM Solid Waste has been able to avoid placing much of these materials in landfills. Keliher continued that to date, Solid Waste has succeeded in finding buyers for these materials, despite a tenuous market. They further noted that recycled plastics are not a money maker for the Municipality.

Councillor Mason joined the meeting table at 2:35 p.m. and spoke in support of a mandatory plastic bag ban. They noted that several key municipal intergovernmental organizations, such as the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities, have adopted positions in support of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), and other regulatory approaches to reducing single-use plastic consumption. They noted that as the largest municipality in Atlantic Canada, it is key for HRM to buy-in to these initiative for them to take hold.

Deputy Mayor Mancini noted that in the absence of Provincial leadership on this issue, it falls to Municipalities to take the lead on single-use plastics reduction. Speaking in support of a ban on single-use plastics, Mancini suggested that the Standing Committee split the vote on the staff recommendation. Deputy Mayor Mancini requested that members of the Standing Committee vote against parts 1 and 3 of the staff recommendation, while supporting parts 2 and 4.

The motion on the floor was split and members of the Standing Committee voted on each individual part as follows:

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Mancini, seconded by Councillor Cleary

THAT the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee recommends that Regional Council direct staff to collaborate with the industrial, commercial and institutional (ICI) sector to develop a voluntary waste reduction strategy for the consumption of single-use items focusing on plastic carry out bags, utensils, cups, containers, straws and other waste items that may be identified through this collaboration, subject to approval of the necessary program funding as part of the 19/20/21 budget.

MOTION PUT AND DEFEATED.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Mancini, seconded by Councillor Cleary

THAT the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee recommends that Regional Council direct staff to initiate an education campaign for residents and the ICI sector focused on the reduction of single-use plastics.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Mancini, seconded by Councillor Cleary

THAT the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee recommends that Regional Council direct staff to consult with industry, internal stakeholders, the public and the Regulatory Modernization Advisory Committee on the development of a regulatory framework required to prohibit the distribution of single-use plastics in the Halifax Regional Municipality, should the initial voluntary approach fail to achieve acceptable results by December 31, 2019.

MOTION PUT AND DEFEATED.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Mancini, seconded by Councillor Cleary

THAT the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee recommends that Regional Council direct staff to review and update the 2009 HRM Corporate Guidelines for Greening Meetings and Catering Requirements.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

The Standing Committee recessed at 3:27 p.m. and reconvened at 3:40 p.m.

In addition to the parts of the staff recommendation approved by the Standing Committee, Deputy Mayor Mancini put forward the following motion:

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Mancini, seconded by Councillor Blackburn

THAT the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee recommends that Regional Council direct staff to collaborate with the ten (10) largest Nova Scotian Municipalities, and draft a By-law for Council's consideration as soon as possible but no later than December 2019, to eliminate the distribution of single-use plastic bags without first attempting a voluntary approach.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

9. NOTICES OF TABLED MATTERS – NONE

10. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

10.1 Correspondence

The Legislative Assistant noted that the Municipal Clerk's Office received correspondence relating to item 8.1, as well as correspondence from S.M. Mandaville dated November 21, 2018, and November 26, 2018, all of which was circulated to members of the Standing Committee.

10.2 Petitions

The Legislative Assistant submitted a petition from the Canadian Association of Retired Persons Halifax Environmental Committee containing 344 signatures requesting a mandatory ban on plastic shopping bags at all Halifax grocery stores and supermarkets.

10.3 Presentations

10.3.1 Banning Plastic Bags In HRM - Mark Butler, Ecology Action Centre

The following was before the Standing Committee:

- A presentation request from Mark Butler dated November 28, 2018

Mark Butler, Ecology Action Centre Nova Scotia, spoke to the Standing Committee about the detrimental environmental impacts of single-use plastic, and called for the Municipality to work towards a ban on plastic bags in HRM. The presentation outlined the negative environmental, economic and social impacts of single-use plastics. They noted that the Ecology Action Centre is advocating for a Province wide ban on single-use plastics, and that a regulatory, rather than a voluntary approach, is preferred.

Responding to questions from members of the Standing Committee, Butler noted that the Ecology Action Centre Nova Scotia has actively petitioned the Provincial Government to take action on this issue. They added that they may lobby for a collection of Municipalities in the Province to take collective action on this issue in the absence of leadership from the Province.

The Chair thanked Butler for the presentation.

10.3.2 Ecopilot Software Presentation – Andrew Deacon

The following was before the Standing Committee:

- A presentation request from Andrew Deacon dated November 28, 2018

- A presentation titled "Ecopilot Canada"

Andrew Deacon, Ecopilot Canada Inc., provided the Standing Committee with a presentation on Ecopilot software, an AI software package that is installed into buildings that are being run by a Building Management System (BMS) to take advantage of thermal energy stored in buildings. In addition to providing the Standing Committee with an overview of how the technology works, Deacon explained that the Ecopilot software is designed to reduce energy consumption and CO2 emissions and will facilitate the Municipality reaching these goals if installed in HRM properties.

Responding to questions from members of the Standing Committee, Deacon explained that the Ecopilot software is housed on a device a little larger than a smartphone, and works to monitor and regulate the temperature and heating for each room in a building.

The Chair thanked Deacon for the presentation.

11. INFORMATION ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD - NONE

12. REPORTS

12.1 STAFF

12.1.1 Onsite Energy Manager, Efficiency NS - David Brushett

The following was before the Standing Committee:

- A presentation titled ``On-Site Energy Manager Update``

Due to the length of the meeting, this matter was deferred to a future meeting of the Standing Committee.

12.1.2 Councillor Appointment – Nova Scotia Solid Waste-Resource Management - Regional Chairs Committee

The following was before the Standing Committee:

- A staff memo titled "Councillor Appointments to Nova Scotia Solid Waste-Resource Management - Regional Chairs Committee"

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Mancini, seconded by Councillor Blackburn

THAT the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee:

- 1. Nominate Councillor Zurawski to the Nova Scotia Solid Waste-Resource Management – Regional Chairs Committee for a term to November 2020; and**
- 2. Nominate Deputy Mayor Mancini as the alternate member to the Nova Scotia Solid Waste-Resource Management - Regional Chairs Committee for a term to November 2020.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

12.2 MEMBERS OF STANDING COMMITTEE - NONE

12.3 BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

12.3.1 Regional Watersheds Advisory Board - Water Quality Monitoring in HRM Lakes

The following was before the Standing Committee:

- A recommendation report from the Regional Watersheds Advisory Board dated November 15, 2018

MOVED by Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Councillor Streach

THAT the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee request staff prepare a report considering:

- 1. Strategic partnerships with volunteer community groups in monitoring the water quality of Halifax Regional Municipality lakes and collecting base line data;**
- 2. Investing in water testing equipment, specifically a Conductivity Temperature Depth (CTD) instrument, for multiple parameter testing;**
- 3. Activating the Green Network Plan strategy and expand its approach to watershed issues; and**
- 4. Consider this recommendation when receiving upcoming studies and reports.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED

13. MOTIONS - NONE

14. IN CAMERA (IN PRIVATE) - NONE

15. ADDED ITEMS

15.1 Deputy Mayor Mancini - Penalties for Illegal Dumping

The following was before the Standing Committee

- A Request for Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee Consideration form

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Mancini, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee

THAT the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee request a staff report to amend By-law S-600 respecting Solid Waste Resource Collection and Disposal to include a section defining illegal dumping and providing the tools for the enforcement of harsher penalties including a reverse onus clause.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

16. NOTICES OF MOTION - NONE

17. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chair invited members of the public wishing to address the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee to come forward.

Alan Collins, Halifax, spoke on behalf of the Canadian Association of Retired Persons. They expressed their support for a mandatory/regulatory ban on single-use plastic bags in the Municipality. They noted that they had submitted a petition to the Standing Committee calling for such a ban containing 344 signatures. Collins circulated photographs to members of the Standing Committee showing the use of single-use plastics in grocery stores within the HRM. They noted that only a fraction of plastic bags in the HRM are being properly recycled. They noted that a mandatory ban on single-use plastics would eliminate the single biggest polluter.

Shalom Mandaville, Halifax, Soil & Water Conservation Society of Metro Halifax, spoke to the Standing Committee about water quality monitoring in lakes located within the Municipality. They suggested that beginning in the summer of 2019, the Municipality should begin fecal coliform testing and monitoring in HRM lakes to ensure they are safe for recreational use. They noted the growing issue of large algae blooms in recent years, and encouraged the Municipality to undertake increased steps to counter this growing issue through regular testing/monitory, and appropriate planning.

Violet Rose McFarland, Dartmouth, noted that they are in favour of a mandatory/regulatory ban on single-use plastic bags in supermarkets in the Municipality. They noted that they regularly volunteer with foodbanks within the Municipality through their church. They explained that their church has recently made a decision to move away from using plastic bags in the delivery of their services to the public, asking those they serve to bring their own reusable bags. They noted that the change in policy has worked, with participants becoming more educated on the harms of plastics and moving towards more sustainable options. However, they noted the need of a mandatory ban to encourage such change, as with single-use plastic bags being so plentiful in supermarkets, people are going to continue to use them. They encouraged the Standing Committee to recommend a mandatory ban.

Lil MacPherson, Halifax, spoke to the Standing Committee about the urgency of taking real action to address climate change, particularly with the finding of the recent Intergovernmental Report on Climate Change. They noted that the Standing Committee plays a crucial role in leading the change needed in the Municipality to address climate change. They noted their concern with the challenges being encountered by environmental initiatives such as the Halifax Solar City Program. They noted that the Municipality should re-examine their support for such initiatives, and that a climate change crisis planning committee is needed for the Municipality in the coming years.

Kate Pepler, Halifax, owner of The Tare Shop, spoke to the Standing Committee in support of a mandatory ban on single-use plastics. Pepler noted that the negative impacts of plastic bags on the environment are well known, and a voluntary approach at this point is inadequate to address the issue. They noted that their business is the first package free shop in Nova Scotia, with their policy resulting in the avoidance of over 4,500 plastics bags being used in the first two months that their business has operated. They noted that they are just one small business, and asked the Standing Committee to imagine the impact of a Municipal, or Province wide ban on single-use plastic bags.

Erin Burbidge, Dartmouth, Clean Nova Scotia Foundation, spoke in support of a ban of single-use plastics in the Municipality. They noted that while they would prefer to see a Provincial wide strategy for reducing or banning the use of single-use plastics, they are encouraged to see the Standing Committee taking a leadership role on this issue. They encouraged the Standing Committee to support a mandatory ban, noted that it is time for decisive action from government.

Duncan Read, Halifax, noted they are an employee of the HRM, but are speaking to the Standing Committee as a resident. They expressed their support of a ban on single-use plastics, and encouraged Council and the Standing Committee to pursue options that reduce the use of single-use plastics in the Municipality as much as possible. They cited other jurisdictions, such as Ontario, where they have implemented such bans with success. They noted the huge amount of waste that single-use plastics cause, as well as the considerable resources that are needed to adequately address the consequences. They additionally noted that there was a time when people got by just fine without plastics bags, and if a ban were implemented, they would adjust quickly.

Jim Cormie, Dartmouth, Director of Atlantic Canada at Retail Council of Canada, spoke on behalf of their organization. They noted that the retail sector is most associated with plastic bags, and rightly so. They noted that their organization does not oppose looking at different options; although the staff recommendation for a voluntary approach is still their preferred approach. However, what they do want is a harmonized approach to single-use plastics, rather than a patch work of regulations in various jurisdictions. They noted that they were in support of a Province led strategy. However, as it appears that the Province will not take leadership on this issue, they encouraged the HRM and other municipalities to endeavour to take a harmonised approach if they seek to regulate single-use plastics. They noted that to do so, the HRM could consult with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to harmonize their approach as much as possible.

Caroline MacPherson, Dartmouth, expressed opposition to a voluntary ban on single-use plastics, as outlined in the staff recommendation. They inquired about the procedures for submitting a petition to Regional Council and the Standing Committee, should they vote in favour of a voluntary ban.

**Environment & Sustainability Standing Committee Minutes
December 6, 2018**

The Chair called three (3) times for any further members of the public wishing to address the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee. There were no additional speakers.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – January 10, 2018

19. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

David Perusse
Legislative Assistant