



**HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES
April 11, 2017**

PRESENT:

Mayor Mike Savage
Deputy Mayor Steve Craig
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
Lisa Blackburn
Tim Outhit

STAFF:

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer
John Traves, Municipal Solicitor
Kevin Arjoon, Municipal Clerk
Jennifer Weagle, Legislative Assistant

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

A video recording of this meeting is available:

http://archive.isiglobal.ca/vod/halifax/archive_2017-04-11_live.mp4.html

The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to Council are available online:

<http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/170411cow-agenda.php>

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. and adjourned at 12:17 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Savage called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION – Rebecca Thomas, Poet Laureate

The Mayor indicated that the League of Canadian Poets challenged Canadian Mayors to bring poetry into the Council Chamber, in support of artists.

Mayor Savage introduced Rebecca Thomas, Poet Laureate, who recited a poem entitled “Not Perfect”.

Committee of the Whole thanked the Poet Laureate for the special presentation.

Councillor Karsten took the Chair, and Mayor Savage took a seat with Council.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – NONE

3. Proposed Multi-Year Financial Strategy 2017-2021, and Business and Capital Plans for 2017/2018 - 2018/2019

- i) Presentation**
- ii) Public Submissions**
- iii) Debate**

The following information was before Committee of the Whole:

- 2017-18 Municipal Budget Highlights
- Staff presentation “Recommended Multi-year Financial Strategy” dated April 11, 2017
- Staff recommendation report dated March 31, 2017
- Multi-Year Financial Strategy 2017-2021
- Metro Transit 2017/18 Annual Service Plan
- Multi-Year Business and Capital Plans – Proposed 2017/18 and 2018/19

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer, provided opening remarks to Committee of the Whole.

The Chair thanked all involved in the budget process, and introduced Amanda Whitewood, Director of Finance & Asset Management, and HRM Chief Financial Officer (CFO).

The CFO introduced staff in attendance to answer questions, Bruce Fisher, Manager of Financial Policy and Planning, and Jane Fraser, Director of Corporate & Customer Services, present in her capacity of former Deputy Chief Administrative Officer.

Amanda Whitewood, Bruce Fisher, and Jane Fraser, presented the Recommended Multi-Year Financial Strategy to Committee of the Whole. The presentation is available online and on file.

The CFO noted a correction on page 12 of the presentation, which should read “Capital, Debt and Reserves *pressures* continue to grow”.

The Chair called three times for Public Submissions at this time, there being none.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Craig, seconded by Councillor Whitman

THAT Halifax Regional Council adopt the:

- 1. “Resolution for Approval of Operating and Capital Budgets and Tax Rates for Fiscal 2017/2018,” as set out in Schedule 1 of the staff report dated March 31, 2017; and**

2. “Resolution for Approval in Principle of Operating Budget for Fiscal 2018/19” as set out in Schedule 2 of the staff report dated March 31, 2017.

A discussion ensued with staff responding to questions of clarification from Councillors.

Regarding a question of funding for rural broadband service, staff advised that rural broadband opportunities will be with partners, and funding would be identified through ICT reserves and bundled accounts as opportunities for partnership come forward.

In response to a question regarding an apparent projected decline in revenue for ice rentals, Brad Anguish, Director, Parks, Recreation & Communities, advised that what is shown is a transition of funds between departments, and there is no actual loss in revenue.

Councillor Mason noted that the budget book incorrectly identifies, under arts funding, long term funding for an arts centre, when Council voted on creating a cultural spaces plan. Jane Fraser indicated that the final budget book will be amended to correct this.

Staff clarified at the request of Council that there is a small amount of area rated debt on top of the “\$245 million debt at the end of year 1”, as noted on page 23 of the staff presentation. Councillor Walker requested that staff provide that figure to Council.

Regarding a question of extended Alderney Ferry service, staff confirmed that, as per Council's direction in February 2017, Alderney Ferry service expansion will be extended to the end of the 2017/18 fiscal year, and that this has not yet been updated in the 2017/18 Halifax Transit Annual Service Plan.

Councillor Smith commented that the intent of the February 2017 motion regarding an increase to the CAO's Office Budget for for the African Nova Scotian Affairs Integration office, Aboriginal Affairs, and Diversity and Inclusion was not captured accurately in the service impact (page L7 of 17/18 – 18/19 Multi-Year Budget and Business Plan (Proposed) document). The CAO advised that staff are working on this and will bring it back to Council soon.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

The Deputy Mayor extended thanks to staff.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:17 p.m.

Kevin Arjoon
Municipal Clerk