



**BUDGET COMMITTEE
(STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ON BUDGET)
MINUTES
February 8, 2023**

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

REGRETS: Councillor Waye Mason

STAFF: Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer
 Caroline Blair-Smith, Deputy Chief Administrative Office, Corporate Services
 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 9:33 a.m. and recessed at 12:04 p.m. Budget Committee reconvened at 1:01 p.m. Budget Committee adjourned at 3:03 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:33 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.

1.1 Budget Adjustment List

The following was before Budget Committee:

- Handout titled, "Budget Adjustment List Summary" dated February 8, 2023

Jerry Blackwood, Executive Director of Finance & Asset Management/Chief Financial Officer provided an overview of the updated Budget Adjustment List and responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – January 18 & 20, and 25, 2023

MOVED by Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Councillor Stoddard

THAT the minutes of January 18 & 20, and 25, 2023 be approved as circulated.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

Additions: None

Deletions: None

Deferred to the February 10, 2023 meeting of Budget Committee:

- Item 6.2 - Human Resources & Corporate Communications

MOVED by Councillor Blackburn, seconded by Councillor Outhit

THAT the agenda be approved as amended.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Not present: Councillors Kent, Mason, Cleary, Cuttell, Lovelace

4. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS – NONE

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Thomas Arnason McNeil, Ecology Action Centre, spoke to the positive work to be done through HalifACT, encouraged Budget Committee to pass the proposed Property, Fleet, & Environment 2023/24 budget, and to remain steadfast in its commitment to the projects within HalifACT.

Colin May, Dartmouth, spoke to the costs associated with the Halifax Regional Municipality's pension plan, displayed a document for the Committee and responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee.

Jerry Blackwood, Executive Director of Finance & Asset Management/Chief Financial Officer responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee and noted that staff would provide an information report regarding the impact of the Halifax Regional Municipality's pension plan on the budget to a future meeting.

6. REPORTS

6.1 Information Technology

The following was before Budget Committee:

- Revised staff report dated January 27, 2023

David Thorpe, Executive Director of Information Technology/Chief Information Officer, gave a presentation and responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee.

MOVED by Mayor Savage, seconded by Councillor Deagle Gammon

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to incorporate the Information Technology 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.

Thorpe responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee regarding the upcoming review of content management for Halifax.ca, actions taken on cybersecurity within the municipality and noted that staff would provide Budget Committee with a detailed breakdown of the office rental and external services budget lines.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Not present: Councillor Mason

6.2 Human Resources & Corporate Communications

The following was before Budget Committee:

- Staff report dated January 27, 2023

This matter was deferred during the approval of the Order of Business.

6.3 Property, Fleet & Environment

6.3i) HalifACT Climate Plan Implementation and Progress Update

The following was before Budget Committee:

- Staff report dated January 23, 2023
- Staff presentation dated February 8, 2023

John MacPherson, Executive Director, Property, Fleet & Environment gave a presentation and responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee.

As provided for in section 37 (1) of Administrative Order One, *Respecting the Procedures of the Council*, Councillor Lovelace requested that the presentation on Item 6.3i) HalifACT Climate Plan Implementation and Progress Update be considered prior to discussion on Item 6.3 Property, Fleet & Environment. Mayor Savage clarified that the HalifACT presentation was a project update rather than a budget presentation.

Shannon Miedema, Director, Environment & Climate Change gave a presentation and responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee.

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

MOVED by Councillor Mancini, seconded by Mayor Savage

THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to incorporate the Property, Fleet & Environment 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.

Jerry Blackwood, Executive Director of Finance & Asset Management/Chief Financial Officer responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee and noted the Climate Action Tax funds the capital delivery of HalifACT and that operational funding for HalifACT comes from the general tax rate.

Shannon Miedema, Director, Environment & Climate Change responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee regarding the staff resourcing plan for HalifACT and the impact of proposed budget reductions for 2023/24.

John MacPherson, Executive Director, Property, Fleet & Environment, responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Austin, seconded by Councillor Lovelace

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

- 2. Move seven HalifACT positions within the 2023/24 Property, Fleet & Environment budget to the Budget Adjustment List, with a possible funding source as the 3% Climate Action Tax, as an operating over budget option for consideration.**

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 and spoke about organizational monitoring of full-time-equivalent staffing positions and their funding sources.

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

Deputy Mayor Austin proposed to amend the motion by including, "together with a briefing note," immediately following, "Budget Adjustment List." 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 Deputy Mayor Austin, seconded by Councillor Lovelace

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

- 2. Move seven HalifACT positions within the proposed 2023/24 Property, Fleet & Environment budget to the Budget Adjustment List together with a briefing note, with a possible funding source as the 3% Climate Action Tax, as an operating over budget option for consideration.**

Shannon Miedema, Director, Environment & Climate Change responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee and noted that priority and scope of positions to be hired could be included in the briefing note.

Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer, responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee regarding staffing vacancies throughout the municipality and organizational capacity for hiring and recruitment.

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

As provided for in section 66 of Administrative Order One, *Respecting the Procedures of the Council*, the motion was withdrawn with consent of Budget Committee.

John MacPherson, Executive Director, Property, Fleet & Environment responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee and noted that staff would provide further information on the request for one additional position within Corporate Real Estate at a future meeting of Budget Committee.

Shannon Miedema, Director, Environment & Climate Change, and Philip Dugandzic, Director, Corporate Facility Design & Construction responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Austin, seconded by Councillor Lovelace

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

- 2. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare a briefing note on the positions originally planned as part of the HalifACT resource plan in 2023/24 including the role of each position, their potential impact on HalifACT, and budgetary implications.**

Shannon Miedema, Director, Environment & Climate Change responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee regarding the scope of the briefing note.

MOTION TO AMEND PUT AND PASSED. (14 in favour, 2 against)

In favour: Mayor Savage, Deputy Mayor Austin, Councillors Deagle Gammon, Hendsbee, Kent, Mancini, Smith, Cleary, Morse, Cuttall, Stoddard, Lovelace, Blackburn, Outhit

Against: Budget Committee Chair Russell, Councillor Purdy

Not present: Councillor Mason

Michael Wile, Manager, Acquisitions, Disposals & Industrial Lands, and Jerry Blackwood, Executive Director of Finance & Asset Management/Chief Financial Officer responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee.

Councillor Russell stepped down from the Chair and Councillor Deagle Gammon assumed the Chair.

John MacPherson, Executive Director, Property, Fleet & Environment and Shannon Miedema, Director, Environment & Climate Change responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee.

Councillor Russell resumed the Chair.

Caroline Blair-Smith, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Corporate Services, and Diane Chisholm, Director, Municipal Facilities Maintenance & Operations responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee regarding proposed 2023/24 budget reductions to contracted services within the Business Unit.

MOVED by Councillor Blackburn, seconded by Councillor Lovelace:

THAT the motion be amended to include alternative motion 1 from the staff report dated January 23, 2023, as a new section that reads as follows:

- 3. Include Alternative 1, a reduction of \$100,000 for Facility Maintenance & Operations janitorial/cleaning contracts as outlined in the Briefing Note BN015 within the proposed 2023/24 Property, Fleet & Environment budget to the Budget Adjustment List as an expense under budget option for consideration.**

Diane Chisholm, Director, Municipal Facilities Maintenance & Operations, and John MacPherson, Executive Director, Property, Fleet & Environment responded to questions of clarification from Budget Committee.

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

In favour: Councillors Hendsbee, Lovelace, Blackburn

Against: Budget Committee Chair Russell, Mayor Savage, Deputy Mayor Austin, Councillors Deagle Gammon, Kent, Purdy, Mancini, Smith, Cleary, Morse, Cuttell, Stoddard, Outhit

Not present: Councillor Mason

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

The question was called on the main motion:

THAT the Budget Committee:

- 1. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to incorporate the Property, Fleet & Environment 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.**
- 2. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare a briefing note on the positions originally planned as part of the HalifACT resource plan in 2023/24 including the role of each position, their potential impact on HalifACT, and budgetary implications.**

MOTION AS AMENDED PUT AND PASSED. (14 in favour, 2 against)

In favour: Budget Committee Chair Russell, Mayor Savage, Deputy Mayor Austin, Councillors Deagle Gammon, Hendsbee, Mancini, Smith, Cleary, Morse, Cuttell, Stoddard, Lovelace, Blackburn, Outhit

Against: Councillors Kent, Purdy

Not present: Councillor Mason

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:03 p.m.

Iain MacLean
Municipal Clerk